

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority has prepared the Lynde Shores Conservation Area Management Plan Report to define the long-term management goals for this important natural resource.

This Management Plan for Lynde Shores Conservation Area identifies the forms, functions and linkages of two provincially significant coastal wetlands located within its boundaries, evaluates the current sensitivities of the area, and proposes strategic directions for its future management concerning issues of restoration and rehabilitation requirements, opportunities for educational, recreational and interpretive uses, requirements for further land acquisition as well as definition and stewardship of the Lynde Creek Watershed's natural heritage system.

The Management Planning Process has relied upon the advice and expertise of members of the watershed community. A community consultation and involvement process was initiated at the start of the management process and provided valuable guidance throughout the study. The recommended vision, goals and objectives provided through this process have shaped the recommendations of this plan.

The Vision Statement developed by the public through their participation in workshops is:

*Lynde Shores Conservation Area is a dynamic natural legacy which we will continue to restore, expand and protect.*

*Through education, interpretation and managed access, our community will gain respect and appreciation for the intrinsic value of our natural heritage. This respect and appreciation will be fostered through the stewardship of owners, users and the community at large.*

*We will achieve this through balanced and managed access for all living things. This peaceful refuge will bring the community together with nature in a way that honours the spiritual, cultural and natural treasures of this very special ecosystem .*

The Management Plan Goal is:

*The Management Plan Goal is to identify, protect and enhance the current and potential natural heritage attributes, functions and linkages of Lynde Shores Conservation Area in conjunction with public use.*

The three accompanying goals are:

### **NATURAL HERITAGE GOAL:**

*The Natural Heritage Goal is to maintain and enhance the ecological integrity of the Lynde Shores Conservation Area. The plan will consider the interaction of the two coastal wetlands, the upland meadow and forested habitats as well as connections north to the watershed, south to Lake Ontario, and east/west along the coast.*

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### **RECREATION GOAL :**

*The Recreation Goal is to evaluate and to accommodate recreational and educational uses within the Lynde Shores Conservation Area compatible with the natural heritage goal.*

### **COMMUNITY GOAL:**

*The Community Goal is to identify and to encourage opportunities for public and private land and water stewardship in the Lynde Creek Watershed and its east/west linkages.*

These goals and objectives have directed an examination of the present attributes of the site, an evaluation of its present health and sensitivity, identified areas of concern and led to the development of strategic directions for the Conservation Area, adjacent lands and the watershed as a whole.

Within the Conservation Area the evaluation has shown that the entire property is sensitive. The present site is not large enough to accommodate public use while respecting this sensitivity. An acquisition plan is proposed to provide additional land that will:

- protect additional sensitive lands in public ownership;
- protect environmentally sensitive lands by relocating activities to less sensitive areas;
- allow for the enhancement of educational and interpretive opportunities;
- reduce the impacts of the privately-owned lands within the conservation area;
- allow for the management of existing features on an ecosystem basis; and
- allow for development and enhancement of corridors and linkages to the west of the property with the Warbler Swamps.

This acquisition will be undertaken through agreements with federal, provincial, and municipal governments and community organizations.

In the interim there are several actions proposed to protect the sensitivities of the site and accommodate increased public use from neighbouring communities including:

- use of unauthorized trails is to be prohibited;
- temporary authorized trails will be provided in the least sensitive areas to keep users off of the private road;
- dogs are to be prohibited due to their disturbance to wildlife;
- canoe launching facilities will be seasonally limited to reduce disturbance to wildlife during critical portions of their life cycle;
- fishing and boating will continue to be prohibited in Cranberry Marsh;
- present restrictions on public access north of Victoria Street will be maintained;
- garbage facilities will be provided in the main parking lot; and
- efforts will be made to rehabilitate the Bird Feeder Trail and woodlot

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Areas of concern have been identified where features with the highest degree of sensitivity have been shown to be in poor health. These areas will be given priority as action is taken to rehabilitate the area. Management Zones based on the area's attributes, functionality and current use, have been determined in order to ensure that strategies are examined in an ecosystem context. Recognizing the sensitivity of the area, Cranberry Marsh Management Zone will be the focus for immediate action. Active management through specific strategies determined in a public consultation process will be initiated in 1999.

Within each management zone a strategy will be developed to address identified issues. Long term objectives for each zone have been identified. Detailed examinations of the opportunities for educational, recreational and interpretive uses within these zones will be defined in each strategy.

The watershed of the Lynde Creek has also been inventoried and reviewed in recognition of the concept that "everything is connected to everything else". The natural heritage system of the watershed and its health will in turn affect the health of the natural heritage features of the Conservation Area. It is recommended that a broader watershed planning exercise be undertaken and a watershed wide stewardship program be developed to co-ordinate existing and future private land stewardship efforts to protect this natural heritage system.

The following outlines the next steps to be taken:

### **Resource Planning for Lynde Shores Conservation Area:**

- initiate preparation of Management Zone Strategy for Cranberry as outlined in the Strategic Directions
- initiate preparation of Management Zone Strategies for all other Management Zones to be carried out over a period of years as ability and opportunities present themselves
- continue in negotiations regarding potential acquisitions
- Undertake research to fill information gaps as outlined in the technical compendium
- Co-ordinate with other groups with an interest in the property to share data related to the site (e.g., Greater Toronto Raptor Watch, Lynde Shores Monitoring Committee)
- Continuously update and improve data base as new information is made available or new land is acquired

### **Resource Planning within the Watershed Context:**

- Complete the inventory of components of the natural heritage system of the watershed
- Determine the particular functions that each performs and how these are linked together
- Evaluate the health of the natural heritage system and determine linkages and connections within the watershed and outside of the watershed
- Determine goals and targets to be achieved through stewardship programs
- Implementation of stewardship programs
- Develop a monitoring strategy to evaluate the success of stewardship programs and determine future priorities

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### Public Use:

- implement interim management directions for Lynde Shores Conservation Area
- evaluate and accommodate recreational uses compatible with the natural heritage goals within the preparation of each Management Zone Strategy
- continue to work in partnerships, both formal and informal, with naturalist groups, school groups, organizations, businesses, and individuals to maximize the recreational and interpretative uses that are compatible with the Natural Heritage Goal



*Aerial view of Lynde Shores Conservation Area (1999 )*