



# Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area Management Plan

[Proposed]



## Acknowledgements

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The 1985 Management Plan: Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, prepared by H el ene L evesque of the Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario), provided the groundwork for this update.

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Environment and Climate Change Canada hosted an information session on August 24, 2016 in Picton, Ontario, regarding the proposed Management Plan for Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area. Information and comments received at this session have not yet been considered in this posted version of the Management Plan. Upon conclusion of the 60-day consultation period, the Department will review and consider all comments received to inform the final Management Plan.

Cover photos: © Environment and Climate Change Canada (left – Yellow-rumped Warbler, taken by David Okines; middle – Short-eared Owl, taken by Christian Artuso; right – aerial view of Prince Edward Point peninsula, includes Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area)

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# About Environment and Climate Change Canada's Protected Areas and Management Plans

## What are Environment and Climate Change Canada Protected Areas?

Environment and Climate Change Canada establishes marine and terrestrial National Wildlife Areas for the purposes of conservation, research and interpretation. National Wildlife Areas are established to protect migratory birds, species at risk, and other wildlife and their habitats. National Wildlife Areas are established under the authority of the *Canada Wildlife Act* and are, first and foremost, places for wildlife. Migratory Bird Sanctuaries are established under the authority of the *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* and provide a refuge for migratory birds in the marine and terrestrial environment.

## What is the size of the Environment and Climate Change Canada Protected Areas Network?

The current Protected Areas Network consists of 54 National Wildlife Areas and 92 Migratory Bird Sanctuaries comprising more than 12 million hectares across Canada.

## What is a Management Plan?

A management plan provides the framework in which management decisions are made. They are intended to be used by Environment and Climate Change Canada staff to guide decision making, notably with respect to permitting. Management is undertaken in order to maintain the ecological integrity of the protected area and to maintain the attributes for which the protected area was established. Environment and Climate Change Canada prepares a management plan for each protected area in consultation with First Nations, the public and other stakeholders.

A management plan specifies activities that are allowed and identifies other activities that may be undertaken under the authority of a permit. It may also describe the necessary improvements needed in the habitat, and specify where and when these improvements should be made. A management plan identifies Aboriginal rights and allowable practices specified under land claims agreements. Further, measures carried out for the conservation of wildlife must not be inconsistent with any law respecting wildlife in the province in which the protected area is situated.

## **What is Protected Area Management?**

Management includes monitoring wildlife, maintaining and improving wildlife habitat, periodic inspections, enforcement of regulations, as well as the maintenance of facilities and infrastructure. Research is also an important activity in protected areas; hence, Environment and Climate Change Canada staff carries out or coordinates research in some sites.

## **The series**

All of the National Wildlife Areas are to have a management plan. All of these management plans will be initially reviewed 5 years after the approval of the first plan, and every 10 years thereafter.

## **To learn more**

To learn more about Environment and Climate Change Canada's protected areas, please visit our website at [www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa](http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa) or contact the Canadian Wildlife Service in Ottawa.

# Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area

The Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area (NWA) was established in 1978 at the eastern end of the Long Point Peninsula at the southeastern corner of Prince Edward County, along the northeastern shore of Lake Ontario to protect a nationally significant area for migratory passerine birds (small perching birds) that pass through the area on route to their breeding sites in the Boreal Forest from their wintering areas in the southern USA, Mexico, and Central and South America. There is no other location on the Canadian side of Lake Ontario where birds are known to occur in such high densities during migration. More than 300 species of birds have been recorded on the point, including songbirds, waterfowl, owls and hawks. In 1998, the south shore of Prince Edward Point, in which the National Wildlife Area is located, was designated as a globally important bird area (IBA) by BirdLife International because the numbers of Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*), Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), and White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*) exceed 1% of the global population.

The 512.9 ha of forest, grassland and wetland habitats is protected as a National Wildlife Area for conservation under the *Canada Wildlife Act* and *Wildlife Area Regulations*. Due to the tremendous numbers of migratory birds that pass through the area, the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO), a non-profit organization, was established as a migration monitoring station in 1995 within the NWA. Every year, the PEPtBO bands numerous species of birds under permit from Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

Thirty-one species at risk, listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), have been recorded within the NWA. For listed avian species at risk, including the Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Antrostomus vociferus*), Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) and Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*), the NWA serves both as an area of respite during migration and as breeding habitat. In addition, Prince Edward Point NWA is an important staging area for migrating bats and Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*). This NWA was one of the first sites in Environment and Climate Change Canada's Protected Areas Network to protect essential habitats for migrant songbirds.

Prince Edward Point NWA is one of ten NWAs in Ontario. This Prince Edward Point NWA Management Plan is an update of the *Management Plan: Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area* (Lévesque 1985) and replaces all other versions.

### **Prince Edward Point is helping to Connect Canadians to Nature**

This site has been selected as one of ten National Wildlife Areas to be part of the Connecting Canadians to Nature (CCtN) initiative. Through this initiative, Environment and Climate Change Canada will invest funding on selected sites over five years (2015-2020) and beyond to improve access infrastructure and to support the development of interpretive on-site programming delivered through collaborative partnerships. Its aim is to provide Canadians with more opportunities to recreate and connect to nature on federal lands managed on their behalf, where these activities will not interfere with the conservation of wildlife and are consistent with site objectives.

Prince Edward Point NWA was selected to implement the initiative because of its proximity to nearby communities and larger urban areas, existing appeal to visitors and existing network of trails, and abundance of wildlife and other natural features.

For greater certainty, nothing in this management plan shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the protection provided for existing Aboriginal or treaty rights of the Indigenous peoples of Canada by the recognition and affirmation of those rights in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

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# 1 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROTECTED AREA

The Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area (NWA) was established in 1978 and provides continentally and nationally important habitat for migratory birds, wildlife, and species at risk. The high concentrations and variety of species documented on the Long Point Peninsula on Lake Ontario are comparable to those occurring at Point Pelee and Long Point on Lake Erie (Goodwin 1971). There is no other location on the Canadian side of Lake Ontario where densities and abundance of migrating songbirds are comparable with those at this location (Okines 2009; Sprague and Weir 1984; Wake 1997; Weir 1974).

The Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area occupies the eastern end of the Long Point Peninsula on Lake Ontario (Figure 1). It consists of 512.9 ha of a variety of upland and shoreline habitats in two parcels of land. This NWA was one of the first sites in Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Protected Areas Network to protect essential habitats for migrant songbirds.

**Table 1: Information on Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area**

<b>Protected Area Designation</b>	National Wildlife Area
<b>Province or Territory</b>	Ontario
<b>Municipality</b>	Regional Municipality of Prince Edward County
<b>Latitude and Longitude</b>	43°54’N, 76°53’W
<b>Size</b>	512.9 ha
<b>Environment and Climate Change Canada Protected Area Designation Criteria</b>	<p>Criteria 1(a) <i>The area supports a population of a species or subspecies or a group of species which is concentrated, for any portion of the year.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High densities and abundance of migrating songbirds, and significant concentrations of staging and migrating waterfowl.</li> <li>• Monarch (<i>Danaus plexippus</i>) breed in the NWA (June – September), and feed and roost in the NWA during migration (late summer – early fall).</li> <li>• Three species of waterfowl around the Point each exceed 1% of the world’s population for each species (Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup, White-winged Scoter)</li> </ul> <p>Criteria 3 (a) <i>The area is rare or unusual wildlife habitat, of a specific type in a biogeographic region.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant numbers of species at risk in Canada and/or rare species in Ontario are found there.</li> </ul>
<b>Environment and Climate Change Canada Protected Area Classification System</b>	Category A – Species or critical habitat conservation
<b>International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Classification</b>	Category IV: Habitat/species management area. Category IV provides a management approach used in areas that have already undergone substantial modification, necessitating protection of remaining fragments, with or without intervention.
<b>Order-in-Council Number</b>	P.C. 1978-3531, November 23, 1978 SOR/78-890 and amended by P.C. 1980-1827 July 10, 1980 SOR/80-538

<b>Directory of Federal Real Property (DFRP) Number</b>	22851
<b>Gazetted</b>	1978
<b>Additional Designations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory – Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) Station – Bird Studies Canada</li> <li>• Prince Edward Point NWA Monarch Butterfly Reserve – 1995 Canada–Mexico declaration on the creation of the International Network of Monarch Butterfly Reserves</li> <li>• Prince Edward County South Shore BirdLife International Globally Important Bird Area (includes NWA)</li> </ul>
<b>Faunistic and Floristic Importance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 334 species of birds have been recorded at the NWA.</li> <li>• Diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey concentrate in large numbers</li> <li>• Supports a diversity of breeding bird species</li> <li>• Significant numbers of birds seek sanctuary in autumn during post-breeding molt</li> <li>• Contains a diversity of habitats including uplands, forest, grasslands, riparian and inland wetlands, barrier beach, cobble beach, limestone cliffs, ponds, Lake Ontario shoreline</li> <li>• Offshore waters adjacent to Prince Edward Point provide migratory habitat for &gt; 1% of the world's population of three waterfowl species: Greater Scaup (<i>Aythya marila</i>), Long-tailed Duck (<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>), and White-winged Scoter (<i>Melanitta fusca</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Species at Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 31 federally listed (endangered, threatened and special concern) species on the <i>Species at Risk Act</i> including: 24 birds, 4 reptiles, 1 amphibians, 1 plant and 1 insect</li> <li>• 35 species designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) have been recorded at the NWA</li> <li>• 9 additional provincially listed species under the Province of Ontario's <i>Endangered Species Act, 2007</i> (ESA) have been recorded.</li> </ul>
<b>Invasive Species and/or Non-native Species</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plants include Dog-Strangling Vine (Pale Swallow-wort) (<i>Cynanchum</i> spp.), Purple Loosestrife (<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>), Garlic Mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>), Common Lilac (<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>)</li> <li>• Animals include feral domestic cats and dogs.</li> </ul>
<b>Management Agency</b>	Environment and Climate Change Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario
<b>Public Access and Use</b>	<p>Public access is allowed for interpretation and recreation on designated trails and roads for day use only which includes hiking, wildlife viewing, picnicking, photography, skiing, snowshoeing via main entrance on Long Point Road. Access to Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour can be gained from the NWA via a boat launch and recreational boating opportunities in Lake Ontario (no lead sinkers).</p> <p>Facilities include: public parking lot, designated hiking trails, public boat launch, and washroom.</p>

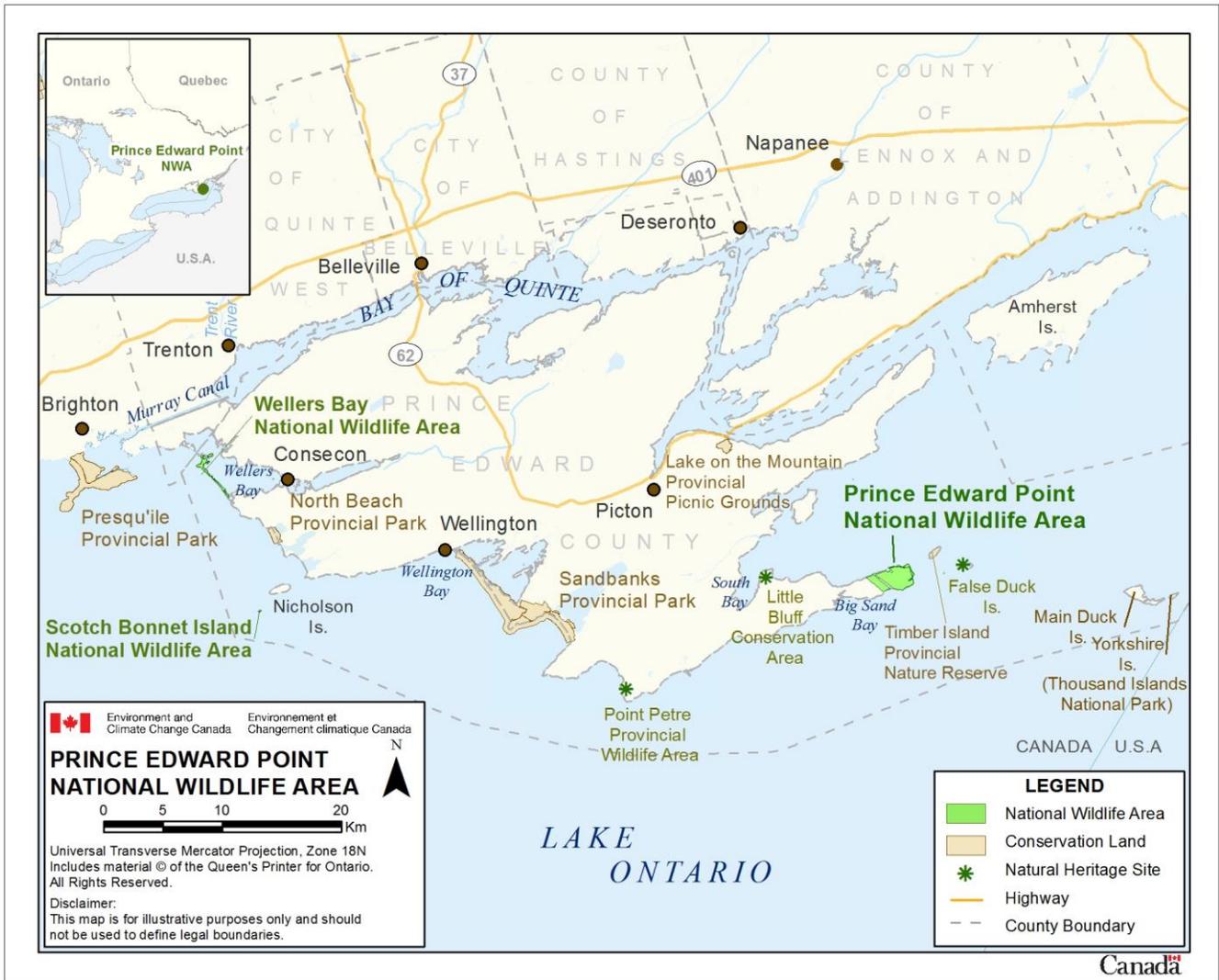


**Figure 1: Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area**  
 Map source: Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service – Ontario, 2016

**1.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT**

The Prince Edward Point NWA is within the Regional Municipality of Prince Edward County, along the northeastern shore of Lake Ontario (Figures 1 and 2). Nearby urban centres include the towns of Picton (the closest one, located 22 km to the northwest) and Belleville to the northwest, Napanee to the north, and the City of Kingston to the northeast.

Prince Edward County is an irregularly shaped peninsula characterized by flat limestone plains covered with a shallow layer of unconsolidated loamy soil. This physical feature was produced by the scouring action of glaciers on sedimentary rock. Agriculture has been the basis for the economy and the predominant land use in Prince Edward County for several generations. The climate, which is moderated by Lake Ontario, is suitable for orchards. In recent years, both wine production and the number of vineyards have increased in Prince Edward County attracting more tourism to the area.



**Figure 2: Natural heritage sites near Prince Edward Point NWA**

Map source: Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service – Ontario, 2016

The Prince Edward Point NWA occurs at the tip of the Long Point Peninsula, at the southeastern end of Prince Edward County (Figures 1 and 2). Adjacent to the NWA along the north shore, there are cottages and a commercial recreational diving operation. Development pressures for marina, residential and tourist industry expansions appear to be increasing. In addition, wind power generation and the demand to increase wind turbine development is increasing along the Great Lakes shoreline.

The adjacent waters of Outlet Bay and eastern Lake Ontario have a long history of productive commercial, recreational, and Indigenous fisheries and are part of a key shipping route through the Great Lakes, and between Canada and the United States.

There a number of natural heritage sites in southern Prince Edward County in addition to the Prince Edward Point NWA including Big Sand Bay and provincially significant South Bay wetlands,

Point Petrel Provincial Wildlife Area, Sandbanks Provincial Park, Little Bluff Conservation Area, Scotch Bonnet Island NWA and the Wellers Bay NWA. Additionally, Timber Island Provincial Nature Reserve and False Duck Island Conservation Area are part of the chain of islands that extend east of the NWA into Lake Ontario. These islands serve as a natural travel corridor for birds migrating in spring and fall across Lake Ontario between Canada and the United States. Yorkshire and Main Duck Islands are part of Thousand Islands National Park and Parks Canada once considered this area as a candidate National Marine Conservation Area to protect marine habitats and landforms representative of the Lake Ontario region (Figure 2).

Prince Edward Point NWA is one of three international Monarch Butterfly Reserves designated in southern Ontario as part of the 1995 Canada–Mexico declaration to create the International Network of Monarch Butterfly Reserves. Many thousands of migrating Monarch (*Danaus plexippus*) feed and rest at Prince Edward Point in late summer and early fall in preparation for their long journey south to Mexico (Hinterland Who’s Who 2003). The other two Canadian sites are Point Pelee National Park and Long Point NWA, which are both located on the northern shore of Lake Erie.

In 1998, the Canadian Nature Federation and Bird Studies Canada recognized Prince Edward County South Shore as a BirdLife International globally Important Bird Area (IBA). The IBA program seeks to identify and protect the most critical habitats for the world’s birds. The Prince Edward County South Shore IBA covers approximately 26 km<sup>2</sup> of land along the south shore of Prince Edward County, including the entire Long Point peninsula and 65 km<sup>2</sup> of nearshore waters of Lake Ontario and Prince Edward Bay (Wilson and Cheskey 2001). The Prince Edward County south shore was designated as a globally significant IBA because the numbers of Greater Scaup (*Aythya marila*), Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), and White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*) exceed 1% of the global population. The south shore is also nationally significant because of the species at risk (as assessed by COSEWIC and COSSARO<sup>1</sup>) found within the IBA (Wilson and Cheskey 2001).

Prince Edward Point has also been identified as a priority area for conservation in Bird Conservation Region (BCR) 13 under the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI)<sup>2</sup> — primarily because of its importance for waterfowl, waterbirds and landbirds.

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<sup>1</sup> COSEWIC: Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada; COSSARO: Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario.

<sup>2</sup> As a first step toward implementing NABCI, the North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation coordinated a project involving, from each country, experts who defined a hierarchical set of ecoregions throughout North America. These BCRs are defined by common biophysical elements, such as soil type, vegetation and associated bird species. In all, there are 67 BCRs throughout North America, including 12 regions wholly or partially within Canada. These BCRs are used as the basis for the planning and evaluation of integrated bird conservation.

## **1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Before European settlement, most of the Long Point Peninsula and the Prince Edward Point NWA property were likely forested. During the Loyalist settlement days, lumbering removed most of the mixed hardwood forest in the area, and land was converted to mixed agriculture, including orchards and pasture. Most of the land was later abandoned, since the shallow soil was suitable only for light pasturing (Mohr and Maltby 1982).

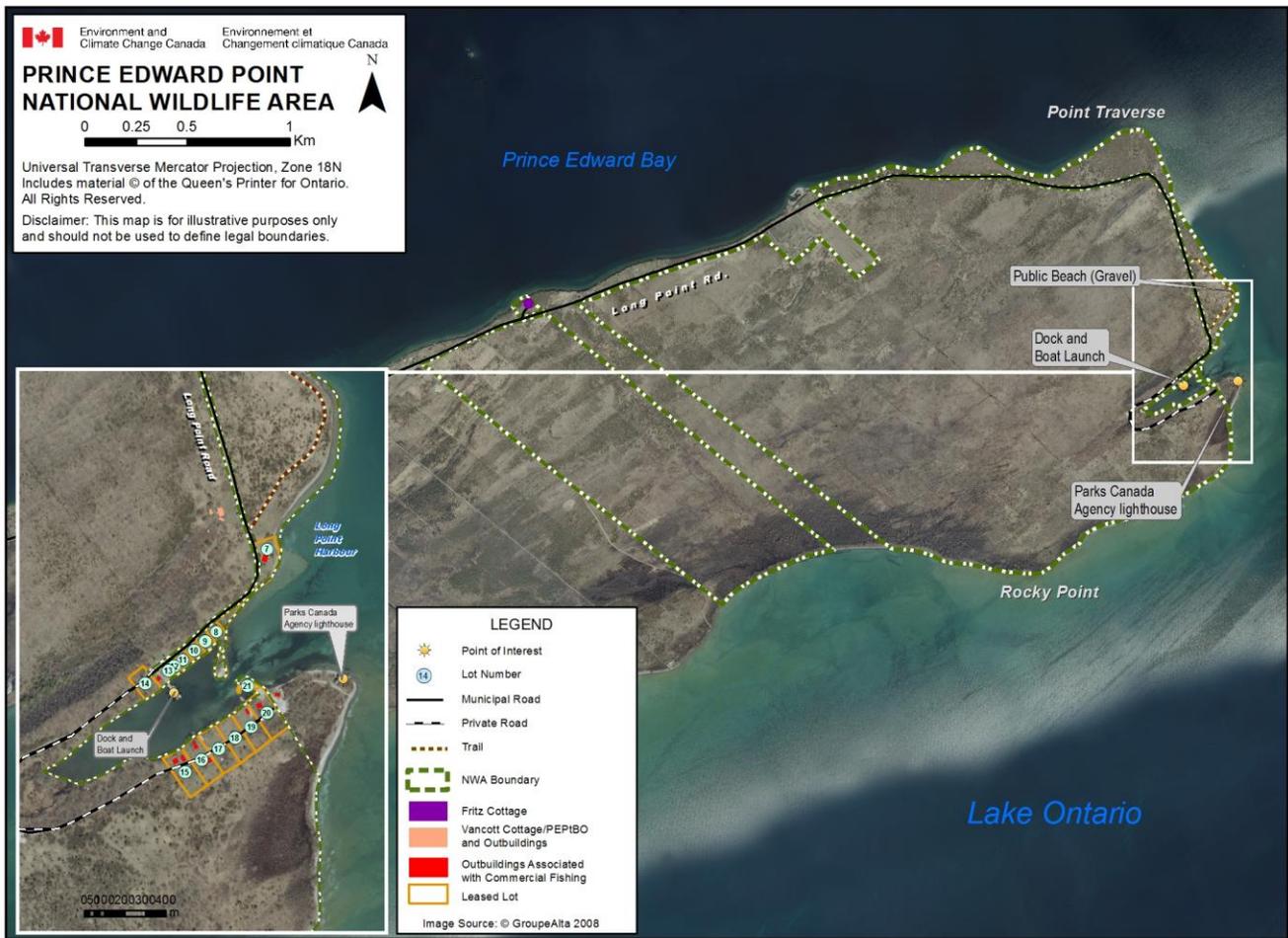
Prince Edward County and the Long Point Peninsula have a long history as a wildlife and human travel corridor across Lake Ontario. In the mid-1960s, the Kingston Field Naturalists recognized Prince Edward County as an important staging area for migratory birds on the shore of Lake Ontario during spring and fall migration. They worked in co-operation with Environment and Climate Change Canada and prepared a proposal to acquire 190 ha of private land to establish one of Canada's first NWA (Kingston Field Naturalists 1976). Subsequently, Environment and Climate Change Canada completed biological studies to assess the values of the proposed NWA. In 1978, Prince Edward Point NWA was established, and additional parcels were acquired between 1978 and 1981.

In the spring of 1985, under a permit from Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO) established a banding and migration monitoring station within the NWA. Since its inception, staff and volunteers at this banding station, which is part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, have recorded 334 species of birds, and have collaborated on research on other migratory species such as bats. In 1999, the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO) was designated as a full member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, a program of Bird Studies Canada (Okines 2009).

Previous management plans have been prepared for the Prince Edward Point NWA (Lévesque 1985) and further rationale for the management actions taken in the past can be found in these plans. This 2016 Prince Edward Point NWA Management Plan updates and replaces all previous versions.

## **1.3 LAND OWNERSHIP**

The Surface title of the Prince Edward Point NWA belongs to the Crown in Right of Canada and is administered by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service as described in Schedule 1 of the *Wildlife Area Regulations* of the *Canada Wildlife Act*. It is comprised of two parcels of land, which are separated by a segment of private property of approximately 40 ha (Figure 3). The Crown Right in Canada does not hold the subsurface mineral rights for either of the two parcels.



**Figure 3: Prince Edward Point NWA land tenure**

Map source: Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service – Ontario, 2016

The southern, eastern and northeastern NWA boundaries extend to the edge of Lake Ontario. Along the north-central and northwestern edge of the NWA, the boundary is Long Point Road. Land north of this road is privately owned except for the staff facilities known as the “Fritz Cottage”. A small section of land at the eastern tip of Prince Edward Point is owned by Parks Canada Agency and is administered by the Thousand Islands National Park. This is the location of the historic Point Traverse lighthouse, which is no longer in use. Entering the structure is prohibited, but visitors may walk on the property and view the exterior; access is through the NWA (around the harbor) by foot after the end of the municipal road.

Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour is situated at the end of Long Point Road. A total of 21 small lots had been surveyed around the harbour (Figure 3) prior to the establishment of the NWA. Commercial use of leased lots is not ordinarily permitted in NWAs. When Environment and Climate Change Canada acquired the Prince Edward Point property in 1978, the Department made an exception and allowed commercial fishers with existing leases with the former landowner to continue

to use the lots under permit for three years. In order to avoid any undue hardship, Environment and Climate Change Canada initially entered into 10 five-year leases with those leaseholders in 1981 to use the 21 lots for land-based activities to support their commercial fishing operations. These five-year leases allowed for a three-year extension. Therefore, in 1989, when they were not formally extended, if they had not already been terminated, the remaining leases went into “over-holding”, effectively a month-to-month lease situation. Some of the leaseholders are now retired or deceased, and their leases have been terminated.

The Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory leases one lot and its buildings, known as the “Vancott Cottage” for use and operation of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network station. Their work contributes to the mission of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Other commitments of federal land within the NWA include the municipal road allowance along Long Point Road, and agreements with Ontario Hydro and Bell Canada for service lines.

#### **1.4 FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE**

Structures on the NWA include: a) a field station (known as the Fritz cottage, named after the former owner) and garage, which serve as accommodation and equipment storage, respectively, for Environment and Climate Change Canada staff and researchers (Figure 4); b) a cottage (known as the Vancott cottage, named after the former owner), storage shed and bird banding shed; c) a number of small cabins and associated fishing net sheds and docks owned and used by commercial fishers; d) a recently-constructed public washroom facility; and e) a dock/wharf, vehicle and trailer parking area and boat ramp/launch (Table 2).



**Figure 4: Fritz cottage, Environment and Climate Change Canada field station at the Prince Edward Point NWA**



**Figure 5: Dock, boat ramp and parking lot in Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour, Prince Edward Point NWA (1998)**

A capital project to refurbish the dock was completed in spring 2011. Overnight mooring is not permitted at this dock (Figure 5).

Long Point Road, which follows part of the northern border of the NWA, is owned and maintained by the Regional Municipality of Prince Edward County. This is the main access road to the NWA, and it ends at the dock and boat ramp. From this point onwards, the harbour access road is owned and maintained by Environment and Climate Change Canada. A fence and gate along Long Point Road, constructed 30 cm above the ground to allow wildlife to pass under it, was installed in 2010 to help prevent off-road vehicle accessing the NWA property. Visitors wanting to view the lighthouse are to walk on foot from the gate along the access road to the point. The use of motorized vehicles within the NWA, except on established roadways, is not allowed except by authorization from Environment and Climate Change Canada.

A public walking trail has been established (Figure 3). Additionally, a series of trails used for the bird observatory migration monitoring operations are open to the public seasonally after spring and fall migration. Two small, open grassed areas, adjacent to the boat launch in the harbour and on Point Traverse, are mowed and maintained for public use.

Concrete parking barriers were placed along the day use area shorefront in 2011 for safety reasons. Cable gates are in place to prevent vehicle access and protect the gravel beaches at this location.

Maintaining infrastructure is an ongoing need at the Prince Edward Point NWA. Regular maintenance is required in order to ensure the safety of authorized visitors, and to minimize potential risks associated with any built structures (e.g., dock, gates, and buildings).

Under the Connecting Canadians to Nature (CCtN) initiative (2015-2020), investments will be made over the next few years to repair and improve the existing trail network, signage, public access to various points of interest and infrastructure, and to update and improve interpretive materials.

**Table 2: Facilities and infrastructure in Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area**

Type of facility of infrastructure	Approximate Size	Responsibility holder or owner
<b>Buildings</b>		
Fritz cottage	75 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Garage	111 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Storage shed	6 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Vancott cottage	75 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Bird banding shed	10 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Solar panel	6 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Storage shed	6 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
<b>Lots</b>		
1 net shed	10 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 7
Fishing net sheds	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 10
Cabin / fishing net shed	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 16
Cabin	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 18
Trailer	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 19
Cabin	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 20
Fishing net shed	25 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 21
<b>Docks</b>		
ECCC public dock / boat launch	50 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
Lot 16 dock	15 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 16
Lot 20 dock	15 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 20
Lot 21 dock	15 m <sup>2</sup>	Lot 21
<b>Roads</b>		
Long Point Road	3.0 km	Municipality of Prince Edward County
Harbour Access Road / gate	0.5 km	ECCC
<b>Recreational Facilities</b>		
Designated hiking trails	0.5 km	ECCC
Parking / lawn area / dock	0.5 ha	ECCC
Parking / lawn – day use	0.5 ha	ECCC
Parking-day use concrete barricades	30	ECCC
Cable gates-day use area	2	ECCC
Fencing along west side of road-3 gates	2km	ECCC
ECCC public washroom	15 m <sup>2</sup>	ECCC
<b>Signs</b>		
Boundary signs	100	ECCC
NWA identification signs	4	ECCC
Public safety notices	8	ECCC

## 2 ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

### 2.1 TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC HABITATS

Prince Edward County is located within the Mixedwood Plains ecozone and is at the geographic limit of the distribution of many northern and southern species. This location coupled with the spectrum of site conditions and continued vegetative succession, supports a rich diversity of habitat types upon which a wide variety of wildlife species, including species at risk, depend.

The Prince Edward Point NWA consists predominantly of meadows and grasslands with scattered or dense shrub thickets (75%); forested uplands (18%); riparian and inland wetlands (6%); shoreline embayments; and cobble beaches and cliffs (1%) (Figure 6). Surrounded by the large surface area of Lake Ontario, the flat topography of the land mass and the thin layer of soil covering the bedrock allows a diversity of microhabitats to flourish within the NWA (Gauthier 1982).

The preliminary terrestrial vegetation survey (White 2008) found four distinct plant communities: a provincially significant undisturbed White Cedar Treed Carbonate Cliff along the northeastern shore of the NWA (rated in Bakowsky (1996) as S3, or rare in Ontario); Dry-Fresh Shagbark Hickory–Prickly-ash Limestone Woodland Type 1 in the northeastern part of the NWA; it is in fair-to-good condition with little disturbance and is provincially significant (rated by Bakowsky (2008) as S1, or extremely rare in Ontario); Mosaic of Dry-fresh Deciduous Forest and Fresh-moist Lowland Deciduous Forest, which occurs in patches in much of the central area part of the NWA; and Cultural Meadow, which occurs in several areas across the NWA.

The terrestrial habitat within the NWA currently consists of a mixture of vegetation in various successional stages. The majority of the NWA is comprised of large contiguous areas that are dominated by grassland or by pasture grasses (Figure 6). Over the past 30 years, successional growth of shrubs, small trees and thicket has reclaimed former pastures. Common species in these thickets include Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), Red-osier Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) and Prickly Ash (*Zanthoxylum americanum*) (White 2008).

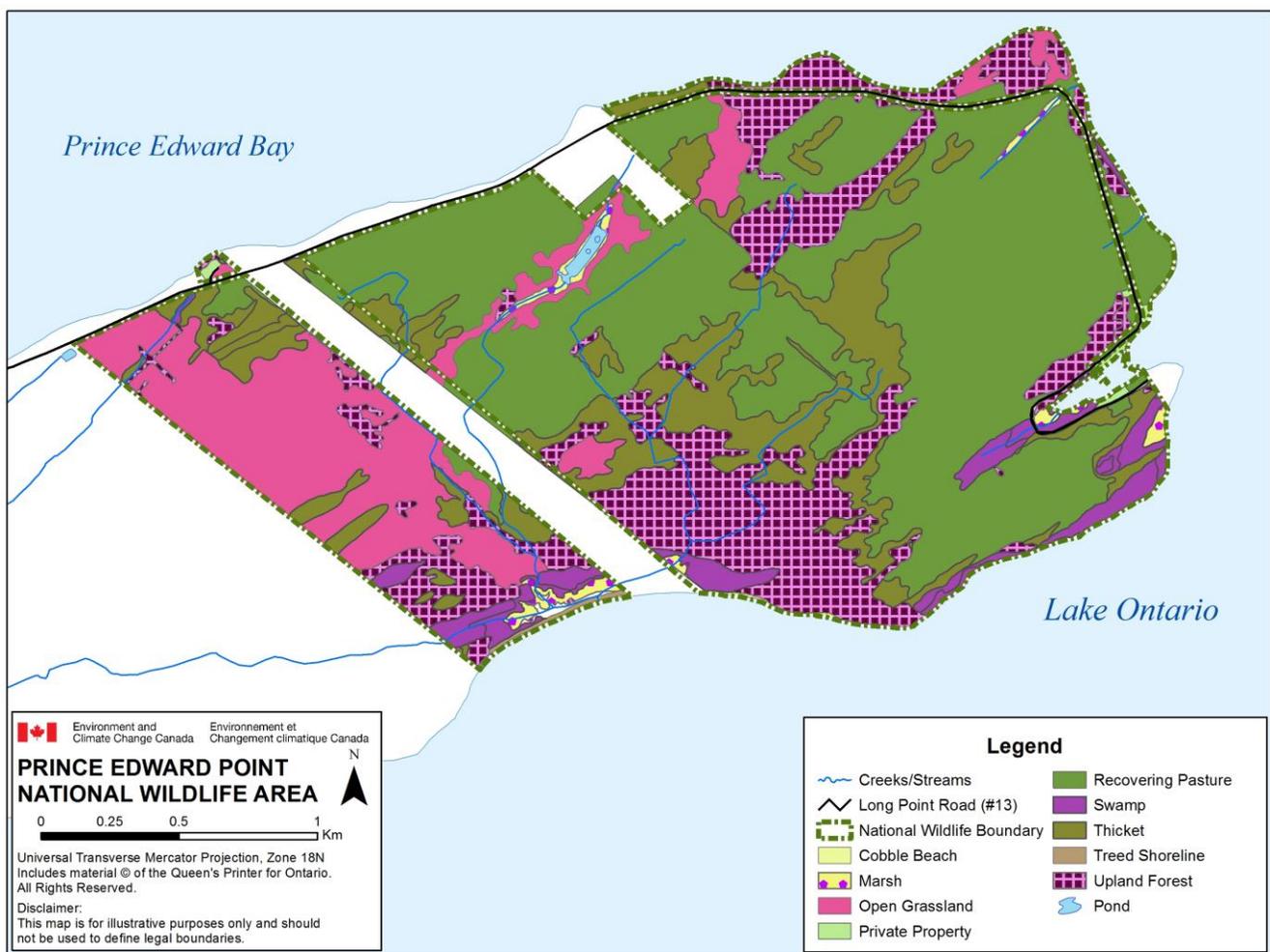
Later successional upland forest predominates the southern portion of the NWA, and also at Point Traverse. In the upland forest areas, Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*), Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) and Ironwood (*Ostrya virginiana*) are the dominant species encountered. The south shore is low and rocky with gravel beaches. In some areas, the beach restricts water flow, thereby creating scattered marshes inland along the shore. Small wooded swamps containing Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*) or dogwoods are generally found surrounding the marshes along the south shore.

The north shore of the NWA is made up of limestone cliffs. A small pond and marshes are

also present within the northeastern portion of the NWA.

Several alvar plant species have become established on the thin soils and shallow depressions overlaying flat bedrock, but no well-developed alvar communities currently occur within the NWA.

Over time, unless ongoing active management (or a wildfire) occurs, the successional growth of shrubs and trees within the grassland and regenerating pasture habitats is expected to return the majority of the NWA to forested conditions. Environment and Climate Change Canada is currently assessing the benefits and feasibility of maintaining a large area (up to 50 ha) at Prince Edward Point NWA as grassland habitat for migratory birds and other grassland species.



Canada

**Figure 6: Prince Edward Point NWA habitat and land cover**

Map source: Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service – Ontario, 2016

## 2.2 WILDLIFE SPECIES

The physical location of the Long Point Peninsula causes a spectacular number of migratory passerine birds to funnel and concentrate at its northeastern tip. During spring and autumn, Prince Edward Point is a vital stopover point for many species of migrating birds. They use the area to rest and feed in order to build up fat reserves for continued migration, and seek sanctuary during their vulnerable stage of post-breeding molt (Mohr and Maltby 1982). The abundance of food and diversity of habitats are such that large numbers of many different species can be supported and protected. Among the 334 species recorded since 1985 are songbirds, waterfowl, waterbirds, owls and hawks. During an average year, approximately 220 species are recorded as migrants. Of the 114 species known to nest in either the NWA or in the near vicinity, 68 species, including the nationally and provincially threatened Eastern Whip-poor-will (*Antrastomus vociferus*) are known to nest regularly within the NWA (Okines 2009).

Numerous songbird species are regular spring and fall migrants such as Ruby-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus calendula*) (300–350 per year), Blue Jays (*Cyanocitta cristata*) (400 per year), Magnolia Warblers (*Dendroica magnolia*) (300 per year) and Yellow-rumped Warblers (*Dendroica coronata*) (500+ per year) (Okines, personal communication, 2011). Over 1000 individual birds can be seen in a single day during the peak migration period.

In autumn, thousands of migrating hawks and owls take advantage of the meadows and shrub areas to hunt for rodents (Okines 2009). The NWA is considered one of the best locations in the province to see Northern Saw-whet Owls (*Aegolius acadicus*) during the fall migration, as they migrate south from the boreal forest to winter down in West Virginia. The Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory has been banding Northern Saw-whet Owls in the NWA since 2000. On average, 700 to 750 Northern Saw-whet Owls migrate through the NWA in late September to late October. The highest numbers of owls banded in a season was 1518 in 2007 and 1022 in 2010 (Okines, personal communication, 2011).

Common fall migrants banded in the NWA in the last decade include Golden-crowned Kinglets (*Regulus satrapa*) (average 850+ per year), Ruby-crowned Kinglets (average 650+ per year), American Goldfinches (*Carduelis tristis*) (average 600+ per year) and Yellow-rumped Warblers (average 250+ per year) (Okines, personal communication, 2011).

Migratory waterfowl species using the deep waters and shoals represent more than 1% of the world's populations of White-winged Scoter, Greater Scaup and Long-tailed Duck. Nearshore waters and wetlands also provide habitat for a range of warm and cold water fish species such as Smallmouth (*Micropterus dolomieu*) and Largemouth Bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), Yellow Perch

(*Perca fluorescens*), and Walleye (*Stizostedion vitreum*).

Prince Edward Point NWA is also an important stopover on the migration route for Monarch. Immense aggregations can be found clinging to cedar trees at the southeastern tip of the peninsula each fall as they wait for favorable winds to cross Lake Ontario. Large numbers of feeding odonates (damselflies and dragonflies) are also encountered during the fall in the fields and woodland edges at the tip of the peninsula (Kingston Field Naturalists 1976).

Little Brown Bats (*Myotis lucifugus*), Silver-haired Bats (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) and Red Bats (*Lasiurus borealis*) have been caught in mist nets and heard using ultra-high frequency bat detectors (Shorrock 1977; Okines 2009).

While a diversity of small mammal species is encountered in the NWA, trapping efforts have documented relatively low populations. This is likely in part the result of high predation by migrating raptors and resident Eastern Gartersnakes (*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*) (Shorrock 1977; Sinden and Hodges 1981).

A recent inventory of reptiles and amphibians found 16 species of snakes, turtles and frogs, and one species of salamander in the NWA (Hamill 2008). Prince Edward Point NWA is believed to have one of the largest concentrations of Eastern Gartersnakes in southeastern Ontario, with a single site of 0.5 ha having an estimated population of 77 individuals (Burrows 1981).

Little is currently known about the suitability of pond and marsh habitats for fish and other aquatic species, including species at risk.

## **2.3 SPECIES AT RISK**

Thirty-one species at risk, listed under the federal *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), have been reported at Prince Edward Point NWA including: 24 birds, 4 reptiles, 1 amphibian, 1 plant and 1 insect (Table 3).

In addition to the federal list of legally protected species, a certain number of species, which were assessed and designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), have been observed in the NWA (Table 3; COSEWIC, 2013): Barn Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*), Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), Eastern Meadowlark (*Sturnella magna*), and Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*) designated as threatened; and Buff-breasted Sandpiper (*Tryngites subruficollis*), Eastern Wood-pewee (*Contopus virens*) and Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*) designated as special concern. The Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*) are provincial species at risk classified as special concern under the Ontario *Endangered Species Act, 2007* and have been reported at this site (Table 3; Government of Ontario

2012). Appendix 1 provides links to more information on federal and provincial species at risk legislation in Ontario.

It is anticipated that critical habitat under SARA may be identified within the NWA for a number of other at risk species.

Most of the species at risk known to occur within the NWA are observed during migration. At this time, most species are likely to use a broader range of habitats than while breeding, and thus are relatively tolerant of variable habitat conditions. Seven species at risk are known to breed within the NWA, with much greater needs for specific habitat conditions.

**Table 3: Species at Risk in Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area**

Common and scientific names of species	Status		
	Canada		Ontario
	SARA <sup>1</sup>	COSEWIC <sup>2</sup>	ESA <sup>3</sup>
<b>Invertebrates</b>			
Monarch <i>Danaus plexippus</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
<b>Amphibians</b>			
Western Chorus Frog (Great Lakes population) <i>Pseudacris triseriata</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Not classified
<b>Reptiles</b>			
<sensitive species>	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened
Northern Map Turtle <i>Graptemys geographica</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
Eastern Milksnake <i>Lampropeltis triangulum</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
Snapping Turtle <i>Chelydra serpentina</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
<b>Birds</b>			
Acadian Flycatcher <i>Empidonax vireescens</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Bald Eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	No Status	Not at risk	Special concern
Barn Owl (Eastern population) <i>Tyto alba</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Barn Swallow <i>Hirundo rustica</i>	No Status	Threatened	Threatened
Black Tern <i>Chlidonias niger</i>	No Status	Not at risk	Special concern
Bobolink <i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	No Status	Threatened	Threatened
Buff-breasted Sandpiper <i>Tryngites subruficollis</i>	No Status	Special concern	Not classified
Canada Warbler <i>Cardellina canadensis</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Special concern
Cerulean Warbler <i>Setophaga cerulea</i>	Special concern	Endangered	Threatened

Common and scientific names of species	Status		
	Canada		Ontario
	SARA <sup>1</sup>	COSEWIC <sup>2</sup>	ESA <sup>3</sup>
Chimney Swift <i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened
Common Nighthawk <i>Chordeiles minor</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Special concern
Eastern Meadowlark <i>Sturnella magna</i>	No Status	Threatened	Threatened
Eastern Whip-poor-will <i>Antrostomus vociferus</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened
Eastern Wood-pewee <i>Contopus virens</i>	No Status	Special concern	Special concern
Golden-winged Warbler <i>Vermivora chrysoptera</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Special concern
Henslow's Sparrow <i>Ammodramus henslowii</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Hooded Warbler <i>Septophaga citrina</i>	Threatened	Not at risk	Not classified
Horned Grebe (Western population) <i>Podiceps auritus</i>	No status	Special concern	Special concern
King Rail <i>Rallus elegans</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Least Bittern <i>Ixobrychus exilis</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Threatened
Loggerhead Shrike <i>migrans</i> subspecies <i>Lanius ludovicianus migrans</i>	Endangered	Non-active	Endangered
Louisiana Waterthrush <i>Parkesia motacilla</i>	Special concern	Threatened	Special concern
Olive-sided Flycatcher <i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Special concern
Peregrine Falcon <i>anatum</i> subspecies <i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	No status	Non-active	Special concern
Piping Plover <i>circumcinctus</i> subspecies <i>Charadrius melodus circumcinctus</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Prothonotary Warbler <i>Protonotaria citrea</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Red-headed Woodpecker <i>Melanerpes erythrocephalus</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Special concern
Red Knot <i>rufa</i> subspecies <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Red-shouldered Hawk <i>Buteo lineatus</i>	Special concern	Not at risk	Not classified
Rusty Blackbird <i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Not classified
Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
Wood Thrush <i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	No status	Threatened	Special concern
Yellow Rail <i>Coturnicops noveboracensis</i>	Special concern	Special concern	Special concern
Yellow-breasted Chat <i>Virens</i> subspecies <i>Icteria virens virens</i>	Special concern	Endangered	Endangered

Common and scientific names of species	Status		
	Canada		Ontario
	SARA <sup>1</sup>	COSEWIC <sup>2</sup>	ESA <sup>3</sup>
<b>Mammals</b>			
Little Brown Myotis <i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered

1. SARA (*Species at Risk Act*): extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened, special concern, not at risk (assessed and deemed not at risk of extinction) or no status (not rated)
2. COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada): extinct, extirpated, endangered, threatened, special concern, not at risk (assessed not at risk of extinction) or data deficient (available information is insufficient to resolve eligibility for assessment or permit an assessment of the wildlife species' risk of extinction))
3. ESA (Endangered Species Act, 2007): Provincial ranking using provincial codes

### **3 MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES & THREATS**

#### **3.1 LOSS OF GRASSLAND HABITATS**

Prior to the establishment of the Prince Edward Point NWA, the land within and surrounding the NWA was used for mixed farms and livestock grazing. While agriculture continues to be the predominant land use in the region, many of the agricultural lands around the NWA have since been abandoned and much of the area is now characterized by regenerating shrubby fields and thickets. Native species such as Red Cedar and Prickly Ash have spread into many of these abandoned fields. Over time, the Prince Edward Point NWA is likely to return to its pre-European settlement state (i.e. forested condition).

These changing conditions benefit some wildlife species but are a detriment to others. Of particular concern is their effect on the suite of open-country bird species, which have been identified as showing the most consistent and severe population declines of any birds in North America (Bird Studies Canada 2009). Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*), which previously bred in the NWA, have been extirpated locally; other grassland species such as the Bobolink may soon follow. Potential effects on migrating grassland birds are not as well documented, but the loss of open grasslands over time is expected to change the mix of species using the NWA as a migratory staging area.

#### **3.2 LAKE LEVELS AND PROJECTED CLIMATE CHANGE**

The main threat to wetlands is the fluctuating water levels of Lake Ontario. The levels have been regulated since 1959 resulting in a lack of extreme high and low water levels that have contributed to changes to riparian wetland vegetation. Vegetation tolerant of drier conditions has expanded, and meadow marsh communities have declined, reducing the diversity of wetland habitat. The influence of precipitation and local climate are more important factors now than changing lake levels in controlling riparian wetland vegetation.

Wetlands along the south shore of the Prince Edward Point NWA, separated from Lake Ontario by barrier beaches, are also showing changes related to the lack of periodic flooding necessary to maintain their diversity and extent. These nearshore marshes provide important spawning, nursery and food sources for fish and aquatic species that subsequently provide food for many species of birds. Several wetland species at risk, including the King Rail (*Rallus elegans*) and the Least Bittern (*Lxobrychus exilis*) no longer breed within the NWA, although some of their former habitats may be considered in future as recovery habitat for these species.

Water-level regulation and control of Lake Ontario have also influenced Long Point Harbour.

The harbor is naturally infilling as a result of wave action and sediment. Possible dredging and other activities related to maintaining an open harbor to the Lake is jurisdictionally complex and outside of the mandate of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

In the face of projected climate change and continued variability, the resources required to monitor and maintain these habitats and to manage invasive and non-native plant species are expected to increase (Galloway et al. 2006). Current models predict that climate change and variability will lead to warmer air temperature due to a decrease in winter ice cover and subsequent increased evaporation. Although the impacts of climate change on the habitats and wildlife of the NWA are unknown, it is expected that there will be changes in distribution, range and breeding behaviours of migratory birds and wildlife using the NWA.

### **3.3 INVASIVE AND NON-NATIVE PLANT AND WILDLIFE**

#### ***Invasive and Non-Native Plant Species***

A large number of non-native plant species occur within the NWA. However, some are well-established over decades and in essence are integrated into existing habitats. Problems arise with aggressive species that have the ability to rapidly spread and consequently displace native species and decrease biodiversity.

Within the Prince Edward Point NWA, the expansion and invasive characteristics of three species are of particular concern: Dog-Strangling Vine (Pale Swallow-wort) (*Cynanchum rossicum*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*). These species out-compete native plant species and reduce the area's native biodiversity including milkweed required for Monarchs.

Determining effective management options to reduce the impacts of these species is often hampered by limited knowledge of the species and the ability of many species to adapt to Ontario growing conditions. Early detection is key to the control and management of invasive species before species are established and adapt to local conditions. Treatment for invasive species is resource intensive.

#### ***Feral and Domestic Animal Species***

Several feral and domestic animals have been documented within the NWA. These include feral cats and dogs and unwanted wildlife (wild boar, raccoons, and skunks) that have been released illegally in the NWA. Although the number of feral cats and dogs in the NWA may be low and their presence infrequent, these animals can exert significant predatory pressure on native

wildlife through nest destruction and the eating of eggs and individuals (birds and turtles), transfer disease and pathogens to wild animals, and disrupt natural habitats through soil disturbance, all of which require ongoing active management.

### **3.4 INCREASE DEMAND FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AND SERVICES**

Since the NWA was established, the population growth in nearby urban centres and increased public interest in recreation has resulted in a rise in the number of visitors to the NWA and an increased demand for services. This trend is expected to continue particularly as Prince Edward Point NWA is encouraging further visitation through the CCtN initiative. Prior to the initiative, the visitation level was not likely to cause direct habitat damage (e.g., through widespread trampling of vegetation), however, the anticipated rise in number of visitors may have the potential to put additional pressure on the site.

There may be an increase in the demand on infrastructure and availability of resources for maintenance of grounds and facilities (e.g. trails, parking lot, access roads, signs, and washrooms), as well as an increase in the need to develop outreach materials to promote responsible and non-detrimental practices and activities. The occurrence of prohibited activities in the Prince Edward Point NWA, such as off-road ATVs and vehicle use, garbage dumping, vandalism, and collection of plants and wildlife places additional pressures on resources required to prevent and mitigate these activities and their impacts.

### **3.5 LEGACY ISSUES**

A legacy from the purchase of lands for the NWA is the presence of 21 lots and associated leases around the Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour area which had been leased by the previous landowners to commercial fishers. Environment and Climate Change Canada entered into 10 five-year leases in 1981. The leases were issued for the sole purpose of permitting the land-based activities normally associated with a commercial fishing enterprise, including temporary structures for storage and seasonal accommodation, docks, and water access for the purposes of commercial fishing. These arrangements were initially made so as not to impose undue hardship on the existing leaseholders. Several of the leases have been terminated; while others that were not formally renewed are considered to be in over-holding.

As well as representing a commercial use that would not normally be permitted within an NWA under the *Wildlife Area Regulations* of the *Canada Wildlife Act*, this activity requires an ongoing investment of management resources to promote compliance and has ecological ramifications such as the need to maintain roads, lawns, increases the risk of potential fuel spills, etc.. There are also ecological implications for the waters surrounding the NWA as periodic dredging of the harbor mouth (provincial jurisdiction) to allow access (sufficient draft/depth) by commercial

fishing boats disrupts the natural succession and filling in of the embayment (harbor). Efforts are required to restore the harbor and associated habitats for the benefit of all Canadians to connect to nature and to balance the needs to multiple user groups.

The NWA lands and surrounding waters were also used as a practice bombing range during World War II and the Korean War, and unexploded munitions may remain in the area; however none have been found on the surface to date by the Department of National Defence (DND). The Prince Edward Point NWA has been designated as low risk based on public access to the site (DND 2013).

### **3.6 MULTI-SPECIES CONSERVATION AND RECOVERY**

Multi-species conservation and recovery is an ongoing challenge in the Prince Edward Point NWA which requires active management to maintain ecosystem functions and species diversity and abundance. For example, invasive species management and grassland maintenance are integral to sustaining habitats. Many species have complex habitat requirements that are not well understood, and small and/or widely distributed populations are often under-represented in general research studies, and their site-specific habitat requirements are unknown. A foreseeable challenge will be how to balance the varying habitat needs of multiple species, including both common species and species at risk.

## 4 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 VISION

The long-term vision for Prince Edward Point NWA is conservation. The NWA is a nationally-significant staging area for migratory birds and waterfowl, and is an international Monarch Butterfly Reserve. Where it does not compromise wildlife management goals; Environment and Climate Change Canada intends to manage the site in a way that allows and encourages public access for the purposes of research, conservation and interpretation in order to foster public understanding and participation in the conservation of this exceptional site.

It is also Environment and Climate Change Canada's vision that the existing leases providing exclusive access to leased lots for land-based activities to support commercial fishing operations for only the leaseholders who are active, licenced commercial fishers will be renewed at current market standards.

### 4.2 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

**Goal 1: Sustain habitats for the benefit of native migratory species and resident flora and fauna, including species at risk.**

**Sub-goal 1.1:** Maintain and improve upland stopover and breeding habitat for migratory birds and wildlife.

Objectives:

- a) Important areas of upland habitat, including woodlands, grasslands, shoreline beaches and cliffs for resident and migrant birds at risk are identified through survey and research.
- b) Appropriate action is taken, based on survey and research results (see Section 5.4) in order to manage and protect important upland breeding and stopover habitat for migratory birds, especially species at risk.

**Sub-goal 1.2:** Maintain grassland habitats in order to retain, and increase where appropriate, dependent resident wildlife and migratory populations, and significant species (e.g., species at risk or those of regional significance).

Objectives:

- a) An area of at least 50 ha is identified and actively maintained as grasslands.
- b) Within this area, the current diversity of grassland species is maintained or increased, perennial shrub and tree cover remains less than 25%, and grassland communities are dominated by native grass species (e.g., Poverty Grass (*Danthonia spicata*), Tufted Hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), Little Bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparia*)).

- c) The extent of available habitat for resident and migrant open-country birds at risk is identified, and maintained or increased in area through active management.

**Sub-goal 1.3:** Maintain and improve the quality of Great Lakes riparian and inland wetland habitats to sustain use by migratory and resident populations of wildlife, including species at risk.

Objectives:

- a) The current extent of wetland habitat, especially for wetland species at risk, is identified, and its areas are maintained or increased.
- b) Potential sources of pollution, excess sedimentation or erosion, or invasive species have been eliminated or are being actively managed.

**Goal 2: Reduce the impacts of invasive species and feral animals on native biodiversity.**

**Sub-goal 2.1:** Reduce the extent and percent cover of invasive alien plant species.

Objectives:

- a) Every five years, map the distribution and percent cover of invasive alien plants to determine areas of concern.
- b) Initiate control programs where cover by invasive plant species exceeds 10% of a plant community, and continue control to maintain cover at or below 10%.

**Sub-goal 2.2.:** Eradicate feral domestic animals within the NWA.

Objective:

- a) Continue to monitor the impacts of overabundant wildlife and feral and domestic animals on diversity of native flora and fauna. Maintain management of overabundant wildlife populations, if required, over the long term.

**Goal 3: Manage human uses of the NWA to meet current standards and ensure conservation objectives are met.**

**Sub-goal 3.1:** Manage remaining leases (2) at Long Point Harbour to ensure compliance with all federal laws, policies and lease provisions and over time restore affected lands and waters.

Objectives:

- a) The activities of seasonal users of the harbour follow federal laws, policies and lease provisions.
- b) Restore lands and shoreline areas with terminated leases, so that no anthropogenic structures (including boats, waste materials, etc.) remain.

c) All harbour maintenance activities follow relevant standards.

**Sub-goal 3.2:** Promote opportunities for responsible public access and use to enhance Canadians' connection to nature, while managing and monitoring visitor (staff, researchers, the public and partners) activities in the NWA, to ensure a safe environment and to reduce the ecological impacts of human use on the NWA.

Objectives:

- a) Coordinate with Federal Wildlife Enforcement personnel for compliance and promotion with respect to *Wildlife Area Regulations* and the *Species at Risk Act*, and reduce the number of incidents of prohibited activities within the NWA to no more than five per year.
- b) Plan and implement Connecting Canadians to Nature infrastructure (trails, signage, and interpretive displays) in order to increase public support, participation in the conservation of the site, and compliance with regulations and site restrictions.
- c) Increase the number of annual visitors from 1,000 (estimate for 2014) to 5,000 by the end of 2020.
- d) Legacy issues are resolved in coordination with Environment and Climate Change Canada's Contaminated Sites Program and Department of National Defence's Unexploded Explosive Ordnance program.

**Goal 4: Increase habitat connectivity in the vicinity of the Prince Edward Point NWA, and support regional landscape-level conservation efforts and partnerships.**

**Sub-goal 4.1:** Consolidate and, where possible, expand the protected area land base to increase connectivity of habitats and migration corridors.

Objectives:

- a) Lands adjacent to the NWA are identified, prioritized and protected through acquisition or other means.
- b) Ensure ECCC-CWS capacity to maintain relationships with government, non-government organizations, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, and stakeholders, to participate in community and stakeholder meetings and coordinate with partners on shared issues and management approaches.

### **4.3 EVALUATION**

Annual monitoring will be performed within the limits imposed by the availability of financial and human resources. The management plan will be reviewed 5 years after its initial approval and reviewed and updated every 10 years thereafter. The evaluation will take the form of an annual review of monitoring data obtained from the monitoring and research projects outlined below. This monitoring will be used to establish priorities for action and to allocate resources.

## 5 MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Active management to maintain upland and wetland habitats and the associated species is required at the Prince Edward Point NWA. The overall management philosophy for the Prince Edward Point NWA is to protect, improve and restore upland and wetland habitats to provide staging and feeding habitat for waterfowl and migratory birds, and in order to ensure the continued existence of wildlife and plants, including species at risk. Species habitat use, timing windows, critical habitats and other constraints will be considered within all management actions.

This section and table 4 contain a description of approaches that could be used in the management of the Prince Edward Point NWA. However, management actions will be determined during the annual work planning process and will be implemented as human and financial resources allow.

**Table 4: Management Approaches for Prince Edward Point NWA**

Management Challenges and Threats	Goals and Objectives	Management Approaches (actions, including level of priority <sup>1</sup> )
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss and degradation of upland stopover and breeding habitat for migratory birds and wildlife</li> <li>• Loss of grassland habitats to natural succession, with associated loss of breeding bird species</li> <li>• Loss of natural water-level fluctuations in riparian wetlands as a result of Lake Ontario water regulation and climate change effects</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 1: Sustain habitats for the benefit of native migratory species and resident flora and fauna, including species at risk.</b></p> <p><b>Sub-goal 1.1:</b> Maintain and improve upland stopover and breeding habitat for migratory birds and wildlife.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.1a:</b> Important areas of upland habitat, including woodlands, grasslands, shoreline beaches and cliffs for resident and migrant birds at risk are identified through survey and research.</li> <li>• <b>1.1b:</b> Appropriate action is taken, based on survey and research results (see Section 5.4) in order to manage and protect important upland breeding and stopover habitat for migratory birds, especially species at risk.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-goal 1.2:</b> Maintain grassland habitats in order to retain, and increase where appropriate, dependent resident wildlife and migratory populations, and significant species (e.g., species at risk or those of regional significance).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.2a:</b> An area of at least 50 ha is identified and is actively maintained as grasslands.</li> <li>• <b>1.2b:</b> Within this area, the current</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct biological inventories for the NWA every five years to report on biological diversity and threats. <b>(2)</b></li> <li>• Monitor habitat change (i.e. extent and quality of wetland, grassland, upland vegetation communities including the extent of invasive species) using aerial photography and site visits. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Survey and monitor species at risk populations to evaluate effectiveness of management activities to protect and enhance critical habitats. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Maintain bird monitoring programs conducted by PEPtBO; collaborate with other organizations on survey, research and monitoring programs; complete periodic habitat assessments. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Implement recommendations from the grassland feasibility assessment (i.e. establish, manage and monitor a 50 ha area of grassland habitat). <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Implement recommendations from recovery strategies for grassland-dependent species at risk where feasible, such as</li> </ul>

	<p>diversity of grassland species is maintained or increased, perennial shrub and tree cover remains less than 25%, and grassland communities are dominated by native grass species (e.g., Poverty Grass (<i>Danthonia spicata</i>), Tufted Hairgrass (<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>), Little Bluestem (<i>Schizachryium scoparia</i>)).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.2c:</b> The extent of available habitat for resident and migrant open-country birds at risk is identified, and maintained or increased in area through active management.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-goal 1.3:</b> Maintain and improve the quality of Great Lakes riparian and inland wetland habitats to sustain use by migratory and resident populations of wildlife, including species at risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1.3a:</b> The current extent of wetland habitat, especially for wetland species at risk, is identified, and its areas are maintained or increased.</li> <li>• <b>1.3b:</b> Potential sources of pollution, excess sedimentation or erosion, or invasive species have been eliminated or are being actively managed.</li> </ul>	<p>maintaining large patches of grassland habitat through mowing or controlled burning. <b>(1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support monitoring and research projects. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Apply habitat management recommendations from recovery documents for wetland-dependent species at risk. <b>(1)</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in biodiversity due to invasion of non-native plant species in parts of the NWA</li> <li>• Predation pressures and habitat disruption by feral domestic animals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 2: Reduce the impacts of invasive species and feral animals on native biodiversity.</b></p> <p><b>Sub-goal 2.1:</b> Reduce the extent and percent cover of invasive alien plant species.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2.1a:</b> Every five years, map the distribution and percent cover of invasive alien plants to determine areas of concern.</li> <li>• <b>2.1b:</b> Initiate control programs where cover by invasive plant species exceeds 10% of a plant community, and continue control to maintain cover at or below 10%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-goal 2.2:</b> Eradicate feral domestic animals within the NWA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>2.2a:</b> Continue to monitor the impacts of overabundant wildlife and feral and domestic animals on diversity of native flora and fauna. Maintain management of overabundant wildlife populations, if required, over the long term.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a baseline inventory and monitor habitat change (i.e. extent and quality of upland and wetland vegetation communities, including the extent of invasive species) using aerial photography and site visits. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Prepare and implement an invasive species plan for the NWA to reduce the spread of invasive and non-native species, where feasible, and prevent new invasive non-native plants from establishing. <b>(2)</b></li> <li>• Undertake targeted control to reduce the spread of invasive and non-native species where feasible. Consider best management practices and guidance documents, where available. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Implement monarch vegetation planting plan. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Undertake planting of native species to restore disturbed sites and to increase riparian and vegetative buffers. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>• Remove problem animals. <b>(1)</b></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage Environment and Climate Change Canada's Wildlife Enforcement Directorate as required. <b>(1)</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased demand for public access and use, especially of waterfront areas</li> <li>Legacy of waterfront lots around Long Point Harbour, and associated dredging and disposal activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 3: Manage human uses of the NWA to meet current standards and ensure conservation objectives are met.</b></p> <p><b>Sub-goal 3.1:</b> Manage remaining leases (2) at Long Point Harbour to ensure compliance with all federal laws, policies and lease provisions and over time restore affected lands and waters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3.1a:</b> The activities of seasonal users of the harbour follow federal laws, policies and lease provisions.</li> <li><b>3.1b:</b> Restore lands and shoreline areas with terminated leases, so that no anthropogenic structures (including boats, waste materials etc.) remain.</li> <li><b>3.1c:</b> All harbour maintenance activities follow relevant standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-goal 3.2:</b> Promote the opportunities for responsible public access and use to enhance Canadians' connection to nature, while managing and monitoring visitor (staff, researchers, the public and partners) activities in the NWA, to ensure a safe environment and to reduce the ecological impacts of human use on the NWA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3.2a:</b> Coordinate with Federal Wildlife Enforcement personnel for compliance and promotion with respect to Wildlife Area Regulations and the Species at Risk Act, and reduce the number of incidents of prohibited activities within the NWA to no more than five per year.</li> <li><b>3.2b:</b> Plan and implement Connecting Canadians to Nature infrastructure (trails, signage, and interpretive displays) in order to increase public support, participation in the conservation of the site, and compliance with regulations and site restrictions.</li> <li><b>3.2c:</b> Increase the number of annual visitors from 1,000 (estimate for 2014) to 5,000 by the end of 2020.</li> <li><b>3.2d:</b> Legacy issues are resolved in coordination with Environment and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post notices and install signs and maintain ECCC-CWS website, to promote compliance with the Wildlife Area Regulations and reduce unauthorized access and occurrence of prohibited activities, and avoid and reduce disturbance to wildlife and habitat. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Post weight limit and "use at own risk" signage at dock(s). <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Implement the Connecting Canadians to Nature visitor landscape plan. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Conduct site visits four times a year to monitor and maintain facilities and infrastructure, and to assess wildlife impacts and mitigate as necessary. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Contract routine site maintenance and reporting activities. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Schedule periodic formal assessments of all facilities and infrastructure and identify contaminant risks. <b>(2)</b></li> <li>Enforce the <i>Wildlife Area Regulations</i> through regular visits by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Wildlife Enforcement Directorate. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Complete periodic monitoring and risk assessments by Environment and Climate Change Canada's Contaminated Sites program and Department of National Defence's Unexploded Explosive Ordnance program. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Complete review and renewal of leases where they are still valid; update lease provisions to current standards; consider consolidating leaseholders on south side of harbour; remove unauthorized users and structures. <b>(1)</b></li> <li>Remove waste materials and restore natural conditions on vacated lots. <b>(1)</b></li> </ul>

	Climate Change Canada's Contaminated Sites Program and Department of National Defence's Unexploded Explosive Ordnance program.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fragmentation of natural habitats providing connecting links for migrant wildlife through development pressures in Prince Edward County</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal 4: Increase habitat connectivity in the vicinity of the Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area, and support regional landscape-level conservation efforts and partnerships.</b></p> <p><b>Sub-goal 4.1:</b> Consolidate and, where possible, expand the protected area land base to increase connectivity of habitats and migration corridors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>4.1a:</b> Lands adjacent to the NWA are identified, prioritized and protected through acquisition or other means.</li> <li><b>4.1b:</b> Ensure ECCC-CWS capacity to maintain relationships with government, non-government organizations, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, and stakeholders, to participate in community and stakeholder meetings and coordinate with partners on shared issues and management approaches.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage conservation of priority adjacent lands through future inclusion within the NWA or other options such as conservation easements in partnerships with local naturalists groups, etc. <b>(2)</b></li> <li>Participate in partnerships and collaborations to address the conservation of adjacent lands and support regional conservation initiatives. <b>(1)</b></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Level of Priority: 1 (from 0 to 3 years); 2 (from 4 to 6 years); 3 (from 7 to 10 years)

## 5.1 HABITAT PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

### *Grasslands and Thickets*

There has been limited active habitat or vegetation management in the NWA in the past. Instead, natural succession has been allowed to take place unimpeded. This has created a diversity of habitat types throughout the NWA that are used by a wide range of species.

To maintain this habitat diversity at the Prince Edward Point NWA, including sufficient habitat for breeding grassland bird species such as the Bobolink, active management will need to occur.

Environment and Climate Change Canada is currently undertaking an assessment of the benefits and feasibility of maintaining a large 50 ha grassland area at Prince Edward Point NWA. The large area reflects the requirements of a number of area-sensitive grassland and open-country bird species. The assessment is reviewing the extent and dynamics of grassland areas on the property, and assessing options for their management and restoration, including recommended plot

size, location and quality. The assessment will also review the habitat requirements and likely impacts of suggested management approaches to grassland and open-country species, including species at risk. The resulting recommendations will be considered relative to the overall management goals and objectives for the Prince Edward Point NWA, as well as the long-term human and financial resource requirements. Additionally, active management of invasive species will be implemented (3-year treatment plan for Dog Strangling Vine) followed by a planting plan for Monarch-friendly plants (Milkweed, etc.).

### ***Riparian Wetlands***

Since the extent of riparian wetlands is affected most by water levels, which are beyond NWA management control, regular surveying will track changes in wetland extent, biodiversity, and the presence and abundance of wetland-dependent species at risk. Research and monitoring will also assess any changes in habitat quality, in part by using wildlife indicators such as the presence of species at risk, including Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentina*) and Western Chorus Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*). Recommendations from recovery strategies or action plans for these species will also be incorporated as available.

### ***Other Habitat Types***

All other habitat types within the NWA—forests, inland wetlands and shorelines—will be monitored through routine site visits to identify emerging issues such as new invasive species that may require a management response. Changes in terrestrial habitat extent and composition will be monitored using aerial photography and vegetation mapping.

### ***Regional Habitat Connections***

Since Prince Edward Point is of particular importance to migrating wildlife, the maintenance of effective ecological connections to other habitats that provide connections for migrants is especially important. These connections include the chain of islands across Lake Ontario to the south and east, as well as habitat patches on the land base of Prince Edward County that assist birds and other wildlife on their passage. Therefore, the NWA has a direct interest in broader landscape conservation initiatives.

Efforts to maintain or increase capacity of ECCC-CWS staff to establish and maintain relationships with neighbours, local planning authorities, conservation organizations, government and non-government organizations, Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, stakeholders and enforcement personnel will facilitate a holistic and coordinated approach for the management and conservation of the Prince Edward Point NWA.

As shown in Figure 3, several parcels of private land extend into the NWA, in one case creating a complete break in continuity of public ownership. Eventual inclusion of these lands within the NWA would be beneficial. In addition, future opportunities may arise to consider conservation of adjacent lands to the west of the current holdings of the NWA, when private owners are seeking to dispose of their lands or willing to consider other options such as conservation easements.

## **5.2 INVASIVE AND NON-NATIVE PLANTS AND FERAL AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS**

The presence of invasive and alien plant species creates competition problems with native species. Because of the history of this site, a significant number of non-native species are already present, many of which are long-established and in essence integrated into existing habitats. Problems arise with aggressive species that have the ability to rapidly spread to the detriment of native vegetation.

Activities to control invasive and alien plant species will be considered only if the species are determined to be causing significant problems for wildlife or the ecological integrity of their habitats. Surveying of known problem species (Dog-Strangling Vine, Garlic Mustard, Common Lilac) will be carried out to document the size and number of habitat patches dominated (> 10% cover) by these species. Interventions to reduce the spread of invasive species or to remove them will be investigated and conducted where feasible.

If a new alien plant species with the potential to become invasive is detected, efforts will be undertaken to eradicate the species within two years of the date it was detected.

Where routine monitoring of the NWA identifies particular problems with feral and domestic animals, removal of problem animals may be undertaken by Environment and Climate Change Canada, and people releasing or feeding feral animals may face enforcement actions.

## **5.3 WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT**

### ***Migratory Birds***

Because of the importance of Prince Edward Point to migratory birds, monitoring activities to be carried out in the NWA will be directed toward obtaining further relevant information on the movements, activities and numbers of migrants and to inform habitat management actions.

The majority of bird monitoring within the NWA will continue to be undertaken by PEPtBO under permit from Environment and Climate Change Canada. The Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) station is currently the only full-time migration monitoring station on eastern Lake Ontario and is one of twenty-five CMMN stations across Canada. PEPtBO is the most easterly migration monitoring station on the Great Lakes, providing important regional information on

Neotropical migrants. The standardized monitoring of migratory songbirds during spring and fall migration is conducted at stations within the network and includes three types of data collection: bird banding, daily observations and census routes.

In 2001, PEPtBO implemented a nocturnal owl monitoring project. Since then, over 2000 owls have been banded during fall migration (Okines 2009). Environment and Climate Change Canada will continue to allow such migration monitoring activities within the Prince Edward Point NWA.

#### **5.4 MONITORING AND SURVEYS**

Monitoring and surveys may be authorized for ECCC-CWS staff, ECCC-WED, and other federal and provincial agencies and researchers where it supports identified research and management needs. Effective and efficient monitoring requires careful planning and a coordinated approach. For species at risk, locations (e.g. resident, breeding and migrant) in the NWA will be identified and monitored over time to assess population size and distribution as well as potential and existing threats. Monitoring methods and priorities will be in accordance with animal care protocols and species recovery strategies, management plans, action plans and other relevant policies.

Ongoing monitoring needs are as follows:

1. establish baseline and track changes in wetland, grassland and forest habitats (i.e., extent and quality, biodiversity, and habitat dependent species at risk);
2. establish baseline population and distribution estimates for key plant and animal species within the NWA;
3. assess the overall ecosystem quality of the area for a range of wildlife and plant species with an emphasis on habitats required by migrating songbirds, waterfowl, owls, hawks, Monarch and species at risk, as well as other provincially rare species; monitor responses to threats;
4. assess the effectiveness of current or future management practices;
5. monitor and assess the impacts of visitation and access on the NWA;;
6. assess the changes in extent and density of invasive and non-native species, and the applicability of control and eradication methods; and
7. assess the vulnerability of wetland and grassland plant and wildlife communities to climate change variability.

The following general site monitoring activities will be undertaken during quarterly visits to the site:

1. site conditions (e.g., roads, fences, gates, occurrence and density of weeds and invasive and alien species);
2. installation or replacement of NWA boundary and regulatory signage;

3. public access and visitor use of trails, parking lot and washroom;
4. occurrences of prohibited activities, vandalism or damage to facilities; and
5. weather events and consequent hazards (e.g., erosion, wind damage, fallen tree limbs).

Beyond the ongoing agreements described above with PEPtBO to monitor migrant birds, Environment and Climate Change Canada will continue to encourage and collaborate with organizations and researchers to monitor various native and non-native wildlife taxa, wildlife disease and pathogens, and to assess response to management practices within the NWA. Examples include monitoring of nocturnal bats, ticks as vectors for Lyme disease, and populations of Monarch.

Special attention may be directed toward populations that appear to play an important role as prey during migration or breeding periods. Small mammals, insects, fish, crustaceans, amphibians or reptiles could be heavily preyed upon by birds during breeding, migrating or staging, or through permanent residence in the area. Gaining a better understanding of the population and distribution of these prey species might show some behavioural relationships or habitat preferences of birds and may be pursued to improve NWA management.

Environment and Climate Change Canada will work with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) Lake Ontario Management Unit to identify and monitor aquatic species in the pond, riparian marshes and harbour within the Prince Edward Point NWA, with an emphasis on species at risk.

Habitat assessments such as vegetation community mapping and species inventories may be conducted periodically to monitor habitat change over time, evaluate management practices, and identify potential threats and stressors to habitat and opportunities for mitigation.

Locations of resident species at risk in the NWA will be identified and monitored over time to assess numbers, distribution, potential and existing threats, and to determine and implement best management practices and recovery actions. Monitoring methods and priorities will be in accordance with species recovery strategies and other relevant policies.

## **5.5 PUBLIC INFORMATION & OUTREACH**

One of the goals of the Connecting Canadians to Nature initiative is to increase public access to the selected NWAs while managing their visitation so that activities do not interfere with the conservation of wildlife. Indeed, one way of reducing damage caused by unauthorized activities is to create opportunities and promote authorized activities, and by communicating this clearly to potential users. Section 6.2 lists authorized activities with special restrictions for Prince Edward

Point NWA.

On-site awareness programs are not being planned for Prince Edward Point NWA. Awareness is generated through a CWS website and via printed materials available on the Environment and Climate Change Canada protected area website at [www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa](http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa).

Goals for public information and outreach include the following:

- a) Explaining the nature of NWAs, their local and regional importance, and the general role of the ECCC–CWS Protected Areas Network and national habitat program;
- b) Explaining the natural and historical human phenomena leading to the diversity of habitats now encountered in the NWA;
- c) Explaining the importance of different NWA habitats to migratory birds, and emphasizing the importance of the area's geographic location to annual migration patterns;
- d) Outlining the importance of the NWA habitats for other wildlife species, including species at risk (reptiles, amphibians, mammals, fishes, plants, etc.);
- e) Promoting appreciation for habitat and wildlife at the Prince Edward Point NWA and the public's role in ongoing protection of the site; and,
- f) Increasing awareness of and promoting compliance with the CWA and *Wildlife Area Regulations*.

To meet these goals, ECCC–CWS has developed printed materials such as the Prince Edward Point NWA fact sheet, which is available to visitors, and installing interpretive signs in public access areas.

## 6 AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES AND PROHIBITIONS

In the interest of wildlife and their environment, human activities are minimized and controlled in NWAs through the implementation of the *Wildlife Area Regulations*. These regulations set out activities that are prohibited (subsection 3(1)) in the wildlife area and provide mechanisms for the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change to authorize certain activities to take place in NWAs that are otherwise considered prohibited. The regulations also provide the authority for the Minister to prohibit entry into NWAs.

Activities within an NWA are authorized where notices have been posted at the entrance to or along the boundaries of the NWA or when notices have been published in local newspapers. All activities in an NWA are prohibited unless a notice has been posted or published authorizing the activity to take place. However, in addition to notices, certain activities may be authorized by obtaining a permit from the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change.

The Minister has the legislative authority to permit activities in the NWA according to the following acts and regulations:

- *Canada Wildlife Act* (section 12 (g)) and *Wildlife Area Regulations* (sections 3(2), 4 and 8)
- *Species at Risk Act* (sections 73 and 74)

For greater certainty, nothing in this management plan shall be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from the protection provided for existing Aboriginal rights or treaty rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada by the recognition and affirmation of those rights in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

### 6.1 PROHIBITION OF ENTRY

Under the *Wildlife Area Regulations*, the Minister may publish a notice in a local newspaper or post notices at the entrance of any wildlife area or on the boundary of any part thereof prohibiting entry to any wildlife area or part thereof. These notices can be posted when the Minister is of the opinion that entry is a public health and safety concern or when entry may disturb wildlife and their habitat.

For the Prince Edward Point NWA, entry is not prohibited. Authorized activities and those activities that will be considered for permitting are described below.

**Note:** If there is a discrepancy between the information presented in this document and the notice, the notice prevails as it is the legal instrument prohibiting entry.

## 6.2 AUTHORISED ACTIVITIES

For the Prince Edward Point NWA, notices authorizing the following activities will be posted at entrances and in public use areas in association with NWA identification signs. Periodic visits by enforcement staff, particularly during periods of high use, will occur and enforcement actions will be taken when required.

Authorized activities **with special restrictions**:

The following public access and authorized activities are allowed in designated areas within the Prince Edward Point NWA between sunrise and sunset daily and do not require a permit:

- Entering the NWA via boat launch in Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour or at the entrance on Long Point Road
- Boat launching and docking by the public, from the dock and boat launch facility (no overnight mooring of recreational boats)
- Hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, wildlife viewing and photography (on the road, the beach and designated trails)
- Bird and wildlife observation (from the road, the beach and designated trails)
- Recreational fishing (no lead sinkers)<sup>3</sup>
- Swimming (at the swimmer's own risk)
- Picnicking (no open fires nor charcoal barbecue)

**Note:** Public access to and recreational activities (hiking, wildlife viewing, photography) in the vicinity of the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (i.e., trails adjacent to the Vancott cottage, 6056 Long Point Road) are restricted in the spring and fall when migration monitoring is underway. Notices are posted seasonally at the Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory to advise visitors.

If there is a discrepancy between the information presented in this document and the notice, the notice prevails as it is the legal instrument authorizing the activity.

## 6.3 RESEARCH

Environment and Climate Change Canada may support research activities within the NWA if the results are likely to provide data and information on topics of interest, including waterfowl and migratory bird population monitoring, habitat supply and quality, protection or recovery of species at risk, habitat restoration, and the effects of invasive and non-native species on habitat and wildlife.

*Canada Wildlife Act* permits are required under the *Wildlife Area Regulations* to conduct

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<sup>3</sup> Provincial permits are required for fishing

research and monitoring in the Prince Edward Point NWA. All research requests must be made in writing. Refer to Appendix II: Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario): Conditions of Research Requests (in National Wildlife Areas). To apply for a permit to conduct research in Prince Edward Point NWA and to receive instructions concerning guidelines for a research proposal, please contact:

Environment and Climate Change Canada - Canadian Wildlife Service  
Ontario Region Permit Office  
867 Lakeshore Road  
Burlington ON L7R 4A6  
Tel.: 905-336-4464  
Fax: 905-336-4587  
Email: [ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca)

Upon completion of the activity, permit holders are required to submit all data/information collected as a result of a permit to ECCC–CWS.

#### **6.4 AUTHORIZATIONS**

Permits and notices authorizing an activity may be issued only if the Minister is of the opinion that the activity is scientific research relating to wildlife or habitat conservation, or the activity benefits wildlife and their habitats or will contribute to wildlife conservation, or the activity is not inconsistent with the purpose for which the NWA was established and is consistent with the most recent management plan. The Minister may also add terms and conditions to permits in order to minimize the impact of an activity on wildlife and wildlife habitat.

All requests for permits or authorizations must be made in writing at least seven weeks prior to the date of requirement to the following address:

Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Ontario Region  
867 Lakeshore Road  
Burlington ON L7R 4A6  
Tel.: 905-336-4464  
Fax: 905-336-4587  
Email: [ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca)

Contact federal and provincial permitting offices for more information.

#### **Federal:**

*Canada Wildlife Act, Wildlife Area Regulations, Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, and Species at Risk Act:*

Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service  
Ontario Region  
867 Lakeshore Road  
Burlington ON L7R 4A6  
Tel.: 905-336-4464  
Fax: 905-336-4587

Email: [ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.wildlife.ontario.ec@canada.ca)

*Fisheries Act and Species at Risk Act:*

Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
Central & Arctic Region  
520 Exmouth Street  
Sarnia, ON N7T 8B1  
Tel: 519-383-1813 or  
Toll-Free: 1-866-290-3731  
Fax: 519-464-5128

*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, Endangered Species Act*

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Natural Resources Information Centre  
300 Water St  
Peterborough ON K9J 8M5  
Telephone: 1-800-667-1940 (toll-free)  
TTY: 1-866-686-6072

For further information, please consult the Environment and Climate Change Canada Policy when Considering Permitting or Authorizing Prohibited Activities in Protected Areas Designated Under the *Canada Wildlife Act* and *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994* (December 2011). This policy document is available on the Environment and Climate Change Canada Protected Areas website at [www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa](http://www.ec.gc.ca/ap-pa).

## 6.5 EXCEPTIONS

The following activities will be exempt from the requirements for permitting and authorizations:

- Activities related to public safety, health or national security, that are authorized by or under another Act of Parliament or activities that are authorized under the *Health of Animals Act* and the *Plant Protection Act* to protect the health of animals and plants;
- Activities related to routine maintenance of NWAs, to the implementation of management plans, and enforcement activities conducted by an officer or employee of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

### ***Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour Leased Lots***

Historically, commercial fishing has occurred off the Long Point Peninsula and commercial fishers have accessed Lake Ontario from the harbour located at the tip of the Prince Edward Point NWA. Since acquiring the NWA, Environment and Climate Change Canada has permitted the original commercial fishers to continue to use the harbour and associated temporary buildings under lease. Leaseholders are allowed to launch and tie up their vessels on the shore or at the docks on

their lots. Commercial fishing vessels are only launched or retrieved from the main dock or shoreline in front of leased lots at the start and end of the season.

The restrictions and conditions of use of leased lots (as per the 1981 leases) are as follows:

- The use of the leased lots is restricted to the original named leaseholder(s) and their immediate families, operating under current OMNRF commercial fishing licenses.
- Use is restricted to the fishing season.
- Any damage to the trees must be avoided.
- Leaseholders own and are responsible for maintenance of their temporary cabins, net sheds, fuel tanks and outhouses.
- Outside fires are allowed in barbecues only.
- Mowing grass and gardening are permitted on the lots.

In 2010, recognizing that this is a commercial use that would normally be prohibited within a NWA; current uses were reviewed to determine whether they are in compliance with their original intent. Since a number of the original leaseholders are deceased or no longer in business, the number of valid leases and actively used lots has gradually declined, and this process is expected to continue over time. Action will be taken to address issues of non-compliance, and seasonal users of the harbour area without authorization of a lease, permit, or agreement will also be reviewed and removed if appropriate.

Shoreline areas and associated lands affected by terminated leases are to be cleared of any structures, debris or foreign materials by the leaseholder upon termination, and will be restored by Environment and Climate Change Canada to a natural state.

### ***Harbour-mouth Dredging***

Occasional buildup of sediments deposited in the harbour mouth area makes the water too shallow for large boats; commercial fishers can no longer use the Point Traverse (Long Point) Harbour. In recent years, the entrance channel to the harbour has been dredged by commercial fishers with authorization obtained under the *Fisheries Act* as well as with Environment and Climate Change Canada permits obtained under the *Wildlife Area Regulations*. Environment and Climate Change Canada has not assumed any responsibility for dredging of the harbour mouth or entrance channel.

## 7 HEALTH AND SAFETY

In the case of environmental emergencies, contact will be made with the Canadian Environmental Emergencies Notification System at the following address:

**www.ec.gc.ca/ee-ue or Telephone: 416-325-3000 or 1-800-268-6060**

All reasonable efforts will be made to protect the health and safety of the public, including adequately informing visitors of any known or anticipated hazards or risks. Further, Environment and Climate Change Canada staff will take all reasonable and necessary precautions to protect their own health and assure safety as well as that of their co-workers. However, visitors (including researchers and contractors) must make all reasonable efforts to inform themselves of risks and hazards and must be prepared and self-sufficient. Natural areas contain some inherent dangers and proper precautions must be taken by visitors, recognizing that Environment and Climate Change Canada staff neither regularly patrol nor offer services for visitor safety in NWAs.

Management activities directed at improving health and safety and reducing the risk of a hazardous occurrence include:

- installation and/or replacement of signs at main access points identifying safety precautions and authorized and prohibited uses for visitors;
- removal of abandoned building materials and debris;
- removal of landfill and agricultural implements when found;
- support for continued monitoring by the Department of National Defence; and,
- installation and maintenance of a trail for access by Environment and Climate Change Canada staff along the boundary of the NWA for management and enforcement purposes.

Site visits by Environment and Climate Change Canada staff are conducted at least four times a year (once a season), to monitor facilities and infrastructure. Periodic formal assessments of facilities, infrastructure and site conditions will be performed by federal agencies.

Through its Contaminated Sites program, Environment and Climate Change Canada conducts site audits to identify contaminants, assess risks and remediate contaminants on federal lands. The Department of National Defence is responsible for unexploded explosive ordnances (UXO) at Prince Edward Point NWA and in adjacent waters.

If a situation warrants, multiple authorities should be advised as soon as possible. Refer to Appendix III for a list of emergency contacts. Reports should include the date, time and nature of the

incident/accident, contact names and information for the reporting party (for follow up information), and other relevant details.

## 8 ENFORCEMENT

The management of NWAs is based on three acts and the regulations thereunder:

- *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994, and Migratory Birds Sanctuary Regulations;*
- *Canada Wildlife Act and Wildlife Area Regulations;*
- *Species at Risk Act.*

To promote compliance with the *Canada Wildlife Act* and *Wildlife Area Regulations*, the CWS posts signs along the NWA boundaries and at main access points to identify authorized activities within each NWA and any conditions imposed on those activities.

Environment and Climate Change Canada's Wildlife Enforcement Directorate (WED) is responsible for the enforcement of federal and provincial wildlife laws. WED officers perform on-site inspections and investigations, and patrol the NWA to promote compliance and prevent prohibited uses within the NWA. When necessary, Environment and Climate Change Canada will lay charges.

Officers monitor compliance with the *Canada Wildlife Act* on an ongoing basis and initiate investigations as required. Officials with CWS Ontario's Protected Areas Unit of Environment and Climate Change Canada report details from site inspections that may require enforcement action.

## 9 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The management plan will be implemented over a 10-year period. Annual work plans will be developed in accordance with priorities and budgets and the details of management plan implementation will be developed through Environment and Climate Change Canada's annual work planning process and will be implemented as human and financial resources allow. An adaptive management approach will be favoured for the implementation of the management plan. The implementation of the plan will be evaluated five years after its publication, on the basis of the actions identified in Table 5.

**Table 5: Implementation Strategy timeline for Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area (2017-2026)**

Activity	Year									
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Site inspection at Prince Edward Point NWA (quarterly)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Maintain signs (replace/install) and public notices	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Implement CCtN initiative	x	x	x							
Monitor visitor use	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Monitoring to identify threats and issues	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Address safety issues in infrastructure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Document and report number and nature of incidents of illegal activities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Review permits, memorandums, agreements and collaborative arrangements, formalize, revise or renew, as appropriate	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Prepare an infrastructure maintenance plan	x	x								
Meet with collaborators, neighbours	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct biological inventory to report on biological diversity and threats			x						x	

Monitor the extent and quality of vegetation communities and changes through time		x			x			x		
Map distribution and percent cover of invasive and non-native plants		x			x			x		
Assess and apply targeted control to reduce spread of invasive and non-native species	x			x			x			x
Monitor and remove feral and domestic animals as needed	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Baseline assessments and ecological monitoring	x		x		x		x		x	
Develop and implement a grassland management plan	x	x								
Assess and implement species at risk recovery actions		x		x		x		x		x
Identify priority lands in the region for conservation and protection		x								x
Review public outreach and education	x			x			x			x

## 10 COLLABORATORS

Collaboration with local agencies and sector organizations to contribute to the protection and conservation of wildlife species and their habitats in the NWA will be favoured.

For instance, collaborations could be developed or pursued with universities and research centres to fill scientific knowledge gaps, with the province to implement species at risk recovery measures, particularly for species under provincial jurisdiction, with non-governmental organizations and municipal authorities to increase public awareness of the objectives of the NWA.

The main organizations likely to collaborate or to have a stake in the management of Prince Edward Point NWA include: neighbouring land managers, a number of government and non-government organizations, leaseholders, and landowners to meet goals for on-site management and contribute to landscape conservation. Current partners include the Kingston Field Naturalists, the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists, Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO), Department of National Defence, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (Glenora Fisheries Unit and Kingston Area office), Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Thousand Islands National Park (Parks Canada Agency), the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation, Municipality of Prince Edward County, Quinte Conservation, Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Prince Edward Stewardship Council, Queen's University, the University of Guelph, local landowners and volunteers.

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## APPENDIX I: LEGISLATION

### Federal Legislation

*Canada Wildlife Act (CWA)*

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/W-9/index.html>

*Fisheries Act (FA)*

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/F-14/>

*Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA)*

<http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/M-7.01/>

*Migratory Birds Regulations (C.R.C., c. 1035)*

[http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,\\_c.\\_1035/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1035/index.html)

*Wildlife Area Regulations (C.R.C., c. 1609) (WAR)*

[http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,\\_c.\\_1609/index.html](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1609/index.html)

*Species at Risk Act (SARA)*

[www.sararegistry.gc.ca/](http://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/)

### Provincial – Ontario Legislation

*Endangered Species Act, 2007 (ESA 2007)*

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/07e06>

*Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, 1997 (FWCA 1997)*

[www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_97f41\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_97f41_e.htm)

*Trespass to Property Act*

[www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_90t21\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90t21_e.htm)

## APPENDIX II: CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE (ONTARIO) CONDITIONS OF RESEARCH REQUEST AT NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREAS

Permission under the *Wildlife Area Regulations* of the *Canada Wildlife Act* to undertake research may be given subject to the following conditions:

1. All requests for research must be accompanied by a written proposal outlining the objectives; project duration; collection of data and specimens and measurements if any, number of participants, funding sources, location where work is to be undertaken, benefits to the NWA, potential detractors; and proposed mitigation measures. All proposals will be subject to a review by the Animal Care Committee of Environment and Climate Change Canada or the submitting institution.
2. No research shall be undertaken without a permit issued under the *Canada Wildlife Act's Wildlife Area Regulations*, and the research must be consistent with the National Wildlife Area (NWA) management plan for the site and relevant legislation (e.g., *Species at Risk Act* or *Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994*).
3. All researchers must conform to regulations in effect regarding the NWA.
4. All researchers are responsible for obtaining all permits (e.g., *Species at Risk Act, Fisheries Act*), approvals, and permissions (e.g., land managers, landowners), prior to commencement of the research project.
5. Copies of raw data (field books and maps), preliminary reports of the research activities and a copy of the final manuscript must be provided to Environment and Climate Change Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service (EC-CWS) Ontario at the end of each field season.
6. Priority will be given to researchers whose work has direct management implications for the NWA and species at risk.
7. Applications to undertake a minor research study must be submitted to the ECCC-CWS Ontario office, in writing, prior to commencement of the project. Permit decisions will be made within 40 calendar days after a complete permit application has been received. When incomplete applications are received, Environment and Climate Change Canada will notify the applicant and the time limit will be "paused" or "suspended" until all missing information is received. Additionally, where an NWA permit application involves activities that may affect a species protected by the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), a 90-day service standard will apply in order to ensure consistency with the *Permits Authorizing an Activity Affecting Listed Wildlife Species Regulations* under SARA.

8. A statement must be provided to ECCC-CWS Ontario on why the research project cannot be undertaken elsewhere.
9. Any proposed work is subject to the *Canada Labour Code*, Part II (subject to the strictest safety certification, training, operational experience and mandatory use of appropriate safety equipment).

**Note:** The Minister may add terms and conditions governing the activity in order to protect and minimize the effects of the authorized activity on wildlife and their habitats.

All projects and activities in the NWAs are subject to environmental screening and, if necessary, to further steps in the Environmental Assessment and Review Process of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

## APPENDIX III: CONTACTS FOR PRINCE EDWARD POINT NWA

<b>Contacts for PRINCE EDWARD POINT NATIONAL WILDLIFE AREA, Ontario Administered by                      Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario)</b> Latitude 43°54' N / Longitude 76°53' W	
<b>Emergency Contacts</b>	
<b>In case of emergency, dial 911.</b>	
General inquiries should be directed to local telephone numbers, not 911.	
<b>NOTE: THE CIVIC ADDRESS FOR PRINCE EDWARD POINT NWA IS</b>	
ECCC Field Station	613-476-4813
Fritz Cottage	Emergency: 911
5245 Long Point Rd. Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area Picton, ON	
<b>Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO)</b>	613-476-5801
Vancott Cottage	Emergency: 911
6056 Long Point Rd.	Operates seasonally:
Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area	Spring: May to June (6–8 weeks)
Picton, ON	Fall: August to November (12–15 weeks)
Any life threatening emergency	911
Police-fire-ambulance	911
Ontario Provincial Police	1-888-310-1122
<b>Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital</b>	613-476-1008
403 Main Street East, Picton, ON	
To report air and marine emergencies, contact Ontario Provincial Police	911 1-888-310-1122
Marine and Air Search and Rescue (Emergency Only)	1-800-267-7270
Coast Guard Joint Rescue Team Coordination Centre (General inquiry only)	613-965-3870
Royal Ontario Mounted Police (RCMP), Ontario Division	519-640-7267
<b>If an Unexploded Explosive Ordnance is found dial 911</b>	
Department of National Defence (DND) Unexploded Explosive Ordnance (UXO) Program (General inquiry only)	1-800-207-0599
<b>To report a spill to air, land or water, call the Ontario Spills Action Centre, 24/7</b>	<b>1-800-268-6060 or 416-325-3000</b>
Poison Control Centres (Emergency only)	1-800-268-9017
<b>Environment and Climate Change Canada – Ontario</b>	
Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario)	1-800-668-6767
Wildlife Enforcement Directorate (Ontario)	905-336-6410
<b>General Contacts</b>	
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (Conservation Officer)	1-877-847-7667
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (General Inquiry)	1-800-667-1940
Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Area Office Kingston ON	613-531-5700
Municipality of Prince Edward County	613-476-2148 x221
Town of Picton	613-476-2148