



2012

CENTRAL LAKE ONTARIO CONSERVATION AUTHORITY LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

In partnership with:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Natural heritage protection has long been one of the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority's primary goals. The basic tools used to protect natural heritage features include planning policies and regulations, public education, working with private land owners through stewardship initiatives, and land acquisition. Planning documents developed in the mid 1960's, 1970's, and again in the 2000's have provided some strategic direction for land acquisition within the CLOCA jurisdiction. The purpose of the CLOCA Land Acquisition Strategy - 2012 is to provide background and direction for the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority's (CLOCA) land acquisition efforts going forward. The strategy provides CLOCA with a solid direction for future land acquisition, and identifies primary and secondary land acquisition target areas. Key lands have been selected for acquisition according to sound natural heritage system planning methods, drawing on information generated through CLOCA's Natural Heritage System modeling, watershed management planning, conservation area management planning, and provincial land use planning. Cultural influences have also been considered for their opportunities and constraints relative to conservation land acquisition initiatives, including aggregate extraction areas, and the Hwy. 407 eastern extension project. This Land Acquisition Strategy also highlights the role that government and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) can play in the implementation of this strategy, and therefore the long-term protection of our key natural heritage features.

Over the last decade alone, CLOCA has secured over 1460 hectares of ecologically significant lands through fee simple purchase and donation. Funding has been provided by various partner sources including; The Province of Ontario, Durham Region, the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, Ducks Unlimited Canada, The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Foundation, the Ontario Heritage Trust (NSLSP), Nature Conservancy of Canada Greenlands Funding Program, and local municipalities including Town of Whitby, City of Oshawa, and the Municipality of Clarington. Similar funding partnerships will continue to be pursued for future acquisition initiatives in the future.

CLOCA now owns 2693 Ha (6657 acres) of ecologically significant land, in the form of both conservation areas and valleylands. Through the protection of natural heritage features and ecological functions, CLOCA is working to preserve the intrinsic values associated with flora and fauna, and improving air quality and safe drinking water in order to maintain a better quality of life for those living, working and/or recreating in CLOCA jurisdiction. This strategy provides direction on where and how to protect additional lands of high natural heritage value in an effort to maintain, and improve the living environment of both the human and wildlife residents within the CLOCA jurisdiction.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Natural heritage protection has long been one of the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority's primary goals. While the science surrounding natural heritage protection has improved greatly since the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) was established in 1958, the basic tools used to protect natural heritage features remains largely the same and include planning policies and regulations, public education, working with private land owners through stewardship initiatives, and land acquisition with long-term ownership. In southern Ontario, a landscape where the large majority of land is in private ownership, land-use policy, education, and stewardship are required to encourage private land owners to continue to protect the natural features that remain on their lands. However, these natural heritage protection tools are not always effective given the intense pressure for land use conversion that currently exists across southern Ontario as a result of a rapidly increasing population. For this reason, land acquisition and ownership of land by public bodies remains the only real way to ensure long-term protection and proper management of key natural heritage features and ecosystems.

Land acquisition has featured prominently at times throughout CLOCA's 57 year history. Planning documents developed in the mid 1960's, 1970's, and again in the 2000's have provided some strategic direction for land acquisition within the CLOCA jurisdiction. With conservation land holdings currently in excess of 2690 Ha (6650 acres), CLOCA is protecting and managing a portion of the key natural heritage features around its jurisdiction. While the way in which these properties have been used has changed somewhat over the years, long-term natural heritage protection has featured prominently, and has been the leading reason behind the majority of land acquisitions over the last 57 years.

CLOCA has been very active in land acquisition in the last decade, acquiring 1465 Ha (3621 acres) in key areas around its jurisdiction. Acquiring this large volume of land in such a short period of time has come as a result of support from provincial, regional, and local municipal levels of government, and from both federal and provincial non-governmental organizations. While the past decade has been very successful in terms of land acquisition, the need for additional protection of key natural heritage features and systems within the CLOCA jurisdiction has never been greater. In light of the current pressure on natural heritage lands from rapid land use conversion, and the impact that future land use plans for the Greater Toronto Area and the Region of Durham may have in CLOCA's jurisdiction over the long-term, CLOCA has taken steps to update its acquisition strategy to better reflect today's land use climate. CLOCA Land Acquisition Strategy - 2012 is meant to provide CLOCA with a solid direction for future land acquisition, identify target acquisition areas, select specific lands for acquisition according to sound natural heritage system planning methods, and highlight the role that government and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) can play in the implementation of this strategy and therefore the long-term protection of our area key natural heritage features. This Strategy will guide CLOCA's land acquisition program until 2031, coinciding with the urban growth forecasts of Durham Region and official plan review timing. A ten-year review will be conducted, incorporating provincial, regional and/or local context changes. From time to time, this Strategy will receive a "mapping update" to ensure that it reflects CLOCA landholdings. In January 2015, a minor update was conducted, adding the above-noted review timelines and "mapping updates", as well as incorporating recent acquisitions and corresponding changes in acres and hectares values.

1.1 CLOCA Background

Enacted in 1946, the Conservation Authorities Act provided the means by which the province and municipalities of Ontario could join together to form a Conservation Authority within a specified area (a watershed or a group of watersheds) to undertake programs for natural resource management.

The mandate provided in the Act states that a Conservation Authority will “*undertake, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals*” (R.S.O., 1990b, C. 27).

CLOCA’s mission is to work towards the awareness, understanding, wise use, and enhancement of our watershed resources for the benefit of the natural environment in partnership with our municipalities and our community.

CLOCA’s objectives are:

- To ensure that lakes, rivers, and streams are properly safeguarded, managed and restored
- To protect, manage, and restore woodlands, wetlands, and natural habitats
- To develop and maintain programs that will protect life and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion
- To provide opportunities for the public to enjoy, learn from, and develop a respect for our natural environment.

In order to fulfill its mandate, CLOCA has developed programs in several areas including:

- Flood and erosion control
- Municipal plan input and review
- Regulatory compliance and protection
- Watershed planning
- Natural heritage planning (woodlands, wildlife habitat, wetlands, stream valleys, and significant areas)
- Watershed monitoring
- Aquatic resource/fisheries management planning
- Groundwater management
- Conservation services/Stewardship
- Education programming
- Conservation land management
- Conservation land acquisition

2.0 REGIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 *Jurisdictional Area*

CLOCA, formed in 1958 at the request of its municipalities, has celebrated over 57 years of protecting local watersheds. CLOCA is situated within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and is bordered by four Conservation Authorities including: The Toronto and Region, Lake Simcoe Region, Kawartha Region and Ganaraska Region Conservation Authorities. The CLOCA jurisdiction is approximately 625 km², and is drained by 21 watersheds. The major watersheds within CLOCA's jurisdiction drain south from the Oak Ridges Moraine into Lake Ontario and include Lynde Creek, Oshawa Creek, Black / Harmony / Farewell Creek, and Bowmanville / Soper Creek Watersheds. This area includes portions of seven local municipalities spanning from Lake Ontario in the south and north to the height of land atop the Oak Ridges Moraine. The CLOCA jurisdiction is entirely within the Regional Municipality of Durham (Figure 1).

2.2 *Provincial and Municipal Legislation*

Conservation Authorities are responsible for the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources (Conservation Authorities Act, 1990) including the development and implementation of programs that achieve these goals. The preparation of a long-term Land Acquisition Strategy will provide the guidance for CLOCA to work towards fulfilling this mandate.

Governments at various levels have recognized the importance of protecting natural heritage systems throughout the Province of Ontario. The Province of Ontario has prepared various planning documents that identify the need for public ownership of more greenspace for recreational purposes, and for the protection of sensitive environmental features. CLOCA's jurisdiction includes areas that fall under the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP, 2002), The Greenbelt Plan (2005), the Provincial Policy Statements (2005), and the Places to Grow (2006). The ORMCP's Natural Core and Linkage and Greenbelt Natural Heritage System are shown on Figure 2. Through various goals and objectives, these plans provide the framework for implementing the Government of Ontario's vision for building stronger, prosperous communities by better managing growth and protecting the environment. Each of these plans also incorporate, in various aspects, the objectives of identifying, maintaining, improving and restoring the ecological and hydrological integrity of the natural systems within these regions for both ecological and human health.

The Official Plan for the Regional Municipality of Durham, and the official plans of CLOCA's partner municipalities all recognize the important role that the environment plays in the quality of life of their watershed residents (human and wildlife alike), and have adopted various policies that identify and protect the natural heritage/open space system. While these policies help to protect the key natural heritage features from future development, they provide only a jumping off point from which to develop a land acquisition strategy.

The many goals and objectives of these plans, which include an identification of the value of natural heritage and hydrologic features, play an integral part in CLOCA's Land Acquisition Strategy by further reinforcing where significant key natural heritage features and systems exist within the CLOCA jurisdiction.

2.3 Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority Plans / Reports

Land acquisition was initially addressed by CLOCA in its first watershed planning document entitled “Central Lake Ontario Conservation Report” (1964). In this report, 4566Ha (11,284 ac) were recommended for acquisition as Authority Forests. The majority of those lands recommended for acquisition were located along the height of the Oak Ridges Moraine, largely in the area between what is now Purple Woods Conservation Area and Long Sault Conservation Area (Figure 3). Other focus areas included lands around what are now Enniskillen Conservation Area and Crow’s Pass Conservation Area.

In 1973, CLOCA completed a report entitled “Conservation Planning Study – Conservation Areas 20 Year Acquisition Plan”. This report outlined the various land acquisition responsibilities of partner municipalities at the time, and put forward a proposed regional parks plan that identified both acquisition targets for both CLOCA and municipal partners. Roughly 3723Ha (9,200 ac) were identified in this proposed regional parks plan, 1959Ha (4,840 ac) of which were recommended for acquisition by CLOCA over a 20 year period (Figure 4). While some of the lands identified in the original 1964 report were still included in the 1973 plan, acquisition target areas were more spread out across the jurisdiction, and not so heavily focused on the Oak Ridges Moraine. Priority acquisition areas were focused largely on the north/south running valleylands, on the waterfront, and the south slope of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Many of the main acquisition areas outlined in the 1973 report continue to be focus areas where acquisition efforts continue today.

Several recent reports have been prepared by CLOCA, including watershed management plans, conservation area management plans, fisheries management plans, CLOCA’s Natural Heritage System (2011), and the Durham Region Greenspace Acquisition Fund: CLOCA Land Acquisition Priorities (2004). Together these studies have identified various components of the natural heritage system, including those of provincial significance, and have provided direction for the protection and rehabilitation of CLOCA’s watersheds.

Protection of the natural heritage features and ecological functions not only preserve the intrinsic value associated with flora and fauna, but also aid in improving air quality, provide safe drinking water, and maintaining a better quality of life for those living working and/or recreating in CLOCA’s watersheds. Further research is also emerging that places an economic value on the Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) provided by natural systems. While specific numbers have not yet been developed for the CLOCA jurisdiction, the value of ecological services associated with carbon storage, water quality supply and filtration, flood control, waste treatment, and clean air can safely be assumed to be worth millions of dollars annually. Understanding these services and their estimated values helps to further identify land acquisition target areas, and support priority acquisition decisions within CLOCA’s jurisdiction.

3.0 EXISTING LANDHOLDINGS

CLOCA currently owns 2693 hectares (6657 acres) of conservation land across its jurisdiction (Figure 1). Much of this land has historically been acquired around a number of specific focus areas, that when combined now make up one of CLOCA’s eight primary Conservation Areas (Lynde Shores Conservation Area, Heber Down Conservation Area, Crow’s Pass Conservation Area, Purple

Woods Conservation Area, Enniskillen Conservation Area, Long Sault Conservation Area, Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area, and Bowmanville / Westside Marshes Conservation Area). In most cases, the primary purpose of these Conservation Areas is the protection of significant natural heritage features and functions. All of these Conservation Areas also have some form of complementary public use infrastructure (including parking facilities, trail systems, education facilities, etc.) that CLOCA actively maintains and promotes to the public for passive recreation. There are a number of additional areas that do not provide infrastructure for public use. Some of these areas lie disconnected, but within close proximity to one of these main conservation areas, or represent valley lands that were initially acquired for flood control/protection purposes. These tracts are managed by CLOCA in conjunction with the closest conservation area, or in partnership with the local municipality.

While the 1964 Central Lake Ontario Conservation Report recommended that CLOCA work towards acquiring 4566Ha (11,284ac) across its jurisdiction over time (ODERM, 1964), acquisition efforts over the first 40 years occurred in stops and starts (Figure 3). By the early 1970's, CLOCA had acquired several hundred acres within the areas of Lynde Shores, Heber Down, Harmony Valley, Enniskillen, and Long Sault. Over the next decade, roughly 400 additional hectares (1000 acre) had been acquired by CLOCA, mainly adding to the land base around Lynde Shores, and Long Sault in an effort to implement some of the recommendations outlined in the 1973 Conservation Areas 20 year Acquisition Plan (CLOCA, 1973). Initial acquisitions were also made in new focal areas including Oshawa Valley, Purple Woods, Cedar Valley, Bowmanville Valley, Bowmanville Harbour, and Stephen's Gulch.

Between the late 1980's and the mid 1990's, acquisition efforts were largely sporadic because of a shift in program priorities for CLOCA, and as a result of significant changes to provincial funding strategies. By the late 1990's and throughout the last decade, land acquisition once again became a program focus for CLOCA for a number of reasons, including a renewed interest from the province for the acquisition of sensitive natural heritage lands (and land acquisition funding programs to support this renewed interest), environmental NGO's were in a position to partner in land acquisition, and there was a new capacity at the CLOCA staff level to support land acquisition initiatives. As a result of this new push, the last decade saw CLOCA more than double the total acreage of sensitive conservation lands when compared to the preceding 40 years.

Taking direction from past acquisition strategies, and drawing on its ever increasing knowledge and understanding of the jurisdiction's natural heritage systems, CLOCA's land acquisition efforts have largely focused on lands within four general areas, including:

- the Oak Ridges Moraine
- lands within the Iroquois Beach physiographic unit
- the Lake Ontario Waterfront (specifically lands within and surrounding coastal wetlands)
- portions of large valleylands within the jurisdiction

Over the last several years, CLOCA has been transferring ownership of many of its urban valleyland properties to their respective Municipal partners including the Bowmanville Valleylands (to the Municipality of Clarington), Cedar Valley Conservation Area (to the City of Oshawa), Harmony Valley Conservation Area (to the City of Oshawa), and much of the Oshawa Valleylands (to the City of Oshawa). Transferring these urban valleylands into municipal ownership ensures that the lands remain in public ownership, the natural heritage and natural hazard related features continue to

be protected in a manner consistent with CLOCA management, and that management of municipal trail systems and infrastructure within these lands can be more seamlessly managed by the municipalities who operate them. Funds provided by the receiving Municipalities have been used by CLOCA to secure additional lands of significant natural heritage value on the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Iroquois Beach, and the Lake Ontario Waterfront.

While significant accomplishments have been made over the last decade with conservation land acquisition; this acquisition strategy is meant to sustain the current momentum, and ensure there is a solid long-term vision and strategy in place to guide future land acquisitions through the next decade and beyond.

4.0 LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY

Through past acquisition efforts, CLOCA has established a significant foothold in protecting some very important natural areas. These landholdings are represented by 8 core areas (Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas) spread across the jurisdiction. This strategy continues to build on these core areas, identifying 2 new primary land acquisition target areas, and supports efforts to connect the core areas through the identification of secondary land acquisition target areas. A layered approach to securement underpins this strategy. Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas build upon the significant landholdings of the Authority and include 2 new areas that possess significant ecological value, including provincially significant wetlands. Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas focus on building natural connections between core areas and capitalize upon supportive environmental policies, partnerships with local government, neighbouring Conservation Authorities, and other organizations sharing an enthusiasm for protecting our natural environment for future generations.

The following sections outline the information and parameters used to develop and identify the CLOCA land acquisition strategy. Lands containing a high concentration of key natural heritage features can be reason enough to establish an acquisition area. But, when considering targets for land acquisition, a number of additional factors must be taken into account that include:

- Building on current Authority land holdings;
- Identifying lands that buffer key natural features from surrounding disturbances, but are not currently protected through policy;
- Identifying lands that help to connect one significant feature or area to another (recognizing both local and regional connection opportunities) to facilitate wildlife movement for example;
- Identifying lands that may currently contribute little to the overall natural heritage system due to current land use activities that are being carried out on them (and are therefore not protected by natural heritage protection policy), but have the potential to contribute substantially to the surrounding natural heritage system given their position on the landscape if they were appropriately restored;
- Determining the risk to natural heritage features if left in private ownership versus public ownership;

- Recognizing the value of other nearby public land holdings or municipal acquisition plans, and the role that they can play in the development of a larger protected greenspace system; and
- Recognizing the opportunities and constraints relative to long-term acquisition activities, that may come about as a result of significant land use development/changes including urban development, provincial land use policy changes (ex. Oak Ridges Moraine and Greenbelt), provincial or regional infrastructure development (ex. Hwy. 407 east extension), and large scale aggregate extraction areas.

4.1 Criteria for Land Acquisition

Recognizing that public land acquisition is a powerful tool that can help ensure long-term natural heritage system protection is an important first step in developing a land acquisition strategy. But, determining which lands should be considered priority targets for acquisition can be challenging in a jurisdiction that is over 625 km². Research suggests that a watershed should contain a minimum of 30% natural cover in order to maintain the basic elements of a functional natural heritage system. While protection of even more than 30% natural cover is encouraged, 30% minimum natural cover already represents a significant amount of land within CLOCA's jurisdiction, much more than can realistically be acquired through public acquisition. As a result, CLOCA has had to strategically prioritize land acquisition efforts in order to ensure that limited acquisition budgets result in the greatest return in terms of natural heritage system protection over the long-term.

CLOCA has used a number of different planning tools, and datasets to help identify realistic land acquisition target areas across its jurisdiction. This information recognizes both ecological values, and cultural influences. These tools and datasets are described below and have contributed significantly in the development of this strategy and the identification of acquisition target areas. In recognition of the potential opportunities for acquisition and the role of watershed partners in fulfilling this strategy, acquisition target areas have been placed into two categories, Primary and Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas. More detail regarding these Primary and Secondary Areas is provided in Section 4.2.

4.1.1 Historical Land Acquisition

As described in Section 3.0, CLOCA has carried out a number of land acquisition planning exercises over its 54 year history. While the science of natural heritage system planning and protection has changed over the years, historical land acquisition areas continue to be relevant and have been acknowledged in the development of this strategy and the target areas that follow. Some of these historic areas have been identified as targets in all acquisition planning documents, which reinforces their significance as land acquisition target areas in the future as well. However, some of the areas historically identified are no longer relevant for one reason or another, including the fact that urban development has occurred in or around a past area, a lack of financial feasibility due to increases in property values in a particular area, the lands are now afforded reasonable protection as result of more recent legislative land use restrictions, or they have been acquired by municipal partners (such as urban valleylands).

Land acquisition areas that have stood the test of time and have appeared in one form or another in all past CLOCA land acquisition planning documents include:

- Lands within the Long Sault area
- Lands surrounding the Purple Woods area
- Lands within the Stephen's Gulch area
- Lands within the Enniskillen valley area
- Lands within the Chalk Lake area

CLOCA has substantial landholdings in these areas and the Authority continues to build upon them. Though not originally recognized in historic land acquisition plans, CLOCA has also amassed substantial landholdings in four other areas over the last 4 decades including Heber Down, Lynde Shores, Enfield Wetlands, and Bowmanville/Westside Marshes.

4.1.2 Watershed and Conservation Area Management Plans/Reports

CLOCA engages in the development of watershed management plans for all of its major watersheds. Developed with long-term planning frameworks in mind, these watershed management plans document the existing conditions (both ecological and cultural) within the watershed, evaluate the health of these watersheds when compared to recommended natural heritage system targets, and provide recommendations on how to maintain or restore the natural heritage system in a way that meets or exceeds the targets recommended by the science of the day. Identification of key natural heritage features that are integral to the long-term health of the watershed is often an outcome of watershed planning exercises. In some cases, protection of some of these key natural heritage features is best accomplished through public ownership. As a result, the land acquisition target areas identified within this Land Acquisition Strategy were developed with regard for the information contained in the various watershed management plans that are available for CLOCA watersheds.

Public ownership of land alone provides a good degree of certainty that those lands and the features within them will be protected from inappropriate land uses over the long-term; however, appropriate management (property security, public use management, natural heritage restoration and resource management) of these conservation lands is imperative to ensure that they contribute positively to the surrounding natural heritage system, and support wildlife populations that should be present in the area. For this reason, CLOCA has been actively developing Conservation Area Management Plans (CAMP) for all of its conservation lands in recent years. These CAMP's all have similar primary goals that include:

- Ensuring the conservation lands in question remain key components in the overall ecological health of their respective watershed
- Providing recommendations on how to protect and enhance the current and potential natural heritage features, functions and linkages within and surrounding the properties
- Ensuring the provision of enjoyable recreational and educational opportunities for the public that will not threaten the health and natural productivity of the area
- Recognizing that the long-term management of the conservation lands shall be informed by the area's cultural and heritage significance, and by the surrounding community.

To achieve the goals of these CAMP's, detailed natural heritage inventories and evaluations are undertaken on the conservation lands. In many cases, the importance of surrounding adjacent lands is highlighted through these CAMP's, whether it be for their existing natural heritage

features, the restoration opportunities that exist within them, or their importance as buffers to key natural heritage features that are already protected within the boundaries of existing conservation lands. For these reasons, information contained within existing CAMP's has been used to help refine many of the land acquisition target areas that follow in this Land Acquisition Strategy.

4.1.3 CLOCA's Natural Heritage System

The development of a Natural Heritage System (NHS) for managing natural resources has become a widespread tool used by Conservation Authorities and planning authorities. A NHS provides a scientifically defensible tool to identify and manage watershed resources in accordance with the Conservation Authorities Act. A NHS can also be used by Municipalities to update municipal environmental policies and inform development of municipal NHS and identification of significant features. The NHS developed by CLOCA offers a connected system consistent with the direction of other provincial land use plans including the ORMCP and Greenbelt Plan, and can be used as support in the implementation of the Natural Heritage section of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). CLOCA's NHS represents a healthy, self-sustaining, connected system that supports: a diversity of native terrestrial, wetland and aquatic species, communities and habitats; natural healthy fish and riparian habitats; and a natural and healthy watershed hydrological cycle. It is a connected system consisting of PSWs, provincially significant ANSIs, important aquatic habitat, riparian corridors, core habitat areas and terrestrial corridors, woodlands $\geq 0.5ha$, wetlands $\geq 0.5ha$, and areas identified for natural cover regeneration/restoration which will improve connectivity and habitat. This approach of identifying a Natural Heritage System that includes existing features as well as regeneration/restoration lands is widely supported by provincial authorities and extensively referred to in the *Natural Heritage Reference Manual for Natural Heritage Policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005 Second Edition*. CLOCA has identified a Natural Heritage System that if protected, would achieve the minimum watershed health targets as set out in the CLOCA watershed plans, and provincial and federal policies. The NHS methodology document was finalized in 2010 and updated in 2011. The development of the NHS allows CLOCA to better manage the natural features and functions of our watersheds based on a systems management approach. As a result, the NHS results provide CLOCA with an excellent tool with which to expand or refine previous land acquisition target areas, and identify new target areas. The Land Acquisition Target Areas that follow have been developed with strong considerations being given to the results of the NHS. The NHS results will also play a large role in assessing the value of acquiring other properties that have been brought to CLOCA's attention, but were not originally identified in any one particular Land Acquisition Target Area.

4.1.4 Connectivity

CLOCA's historical and recent acquisition efforts have focused on areas of high natural heritage value in an effort to protect the important natural features and hazards found in these areas. These landholdings exist as pockets or "islands" of green across our watershed and are found in all 3 of the physiographic regions, including the Oak Ridges Moraine, the Lake Iroquois Beach and the Lake Ontario Shoreline. To circumvent the possibility of these islands of green becoming isolated and unconnected, an effort will be made to establish new, or protect existing, connectivity between these landholdings where appropriate. Making these connections will focus on opportunities to protect natural features or areas having restoration potential. Achieving connectivity will be challenging considering the size of the Authority's jurisdiction and the competing interests for land that exist today, and that are expected to become greater in the

future. While the goal will be to acquire seamless corridor connections, it may not be possible to physically join all of the Authority's landholdings. But, disconnected connections can still provide "stepping stones" between our existing Conservation Areas. In an effort to create these connected corridors, a variety of options will be considered; including valleylands, stream corridors, and road allowances (unopened and open). CLOCA's main focus for providing connectivity will be along the Oak Ridges Moraine. Achieving connections along the Lake Ontario Shoreline, and between the Shoreline and the Lake Iroquois Beach and further north, particularly through the urban and urbanizing areas, will substantially depend upon our watershed partners, including the Region and Local Municipalities. Looking beyond CLOCA's jurisdiction, our neighbouring Conservation Authority landholdings have been acknowledged in this strategy, and opportunities to create regional greenspace connections have been identified. These corridor connection priority areas have been identified within this strategy as CLOCA Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas and Partner Land Acquisition Opportunities are described further in Section 4.2.

4.1.5 Public Land Holdings

Public landholdings owned by public bodies other than CLOCA can provide good jumping off points for future land acquisition activities and have been acknowledged by CLOCA in the development of the Land Acquisition Target Areas that follow. Public landholdings can be used as footholds to build off of in new acquisition areas, can function as wildlife corridor linkage lands between two areas of high natural heritage value, can provide buffering capacity to adjacent lands containing high value natural heritage features, or can represent core habitat areas in adjacent Conservation Authority jurisdictions. The establishment of a corridor between these core habitat areas and ones within CLOCA's jurisdiction can be justified (Ganaraska Forest to the northeast, and Durham Forest together with adjacent TRCA lands in the northwest, East Cross Forest to the north). In some areas within and adjacent to our jurisdiction, public bodies already own large portions of areas of high ecological value that would otherwise have been identified by CLOCA as land acquisition targets. In other areas, CLOCA believes that municipal ownership would be the most appropriate. The location of these existing public landholdings relative to current conservation lands has been recognized in the development of the target acquisition areas that follow. Areas where additional public ownership of greenspace should occur, but through partner ownership (municipalities and other conservation authorities for example) have also been identified in the target acquisition areas that follow.

4.1.6 Aggregate Extraction Areas

Given the lasting legacy left by the glaciers in southern Ontario, and more importantly in the CLOCA jurisdiction, aggregate extraction has been and will continue to be an important industry in our area. High quality sands, gravels, and to a lesser degree limestone, have been the main aggregate commodities that continue to be extracted across the CLOCA jurisdiction. Areas along the Iroquois Beach physiographic unit and Oak Ridges Moraine have always attracted the majority of the aggregate extraction activity. While this extraction continues to occur in earnest in some portions of the jurisdiction, including the northern portion of Clarington, and several other pockets along the Oak Ridges Moraine), historical remnants of this activity can still be found scattered throughout the area.

It may seem counter intuitive to be discussing aggregate extraction areas in a land acquisition strategy that is focused heavily on the protection of key natural heritage features and systems.

But, aggregate extraction areas should be recognized in any natural heritage planning exercise because these areas can in some cases represent significant opportunities for long-term natural heritage system development. Few, if any, historical or active aggregate extraction areas feature prominently in any natural heritage identification modeling, and in some cases negatively detract from the quality of surrounding natural heritage systems. But, the properties involved in these activities are often large in size, are often contiguous with other land parcels that are also actively being worked for aggregate or have been historically, and are often owned by larger corporations that may have an interest in the tax benefits that could be derived from the transfer of lands to a conservation organization. Although these heavily altered lands may not currently contribute to the natural heritage system, they have the potential to be rehabilitated in such a way that supports/complements larger natural heritage system planning goals, and therefore should not be overlooked from a land acquisition planning point of view.

Natural heritage restoration can be costly on any land, even more so on lands that have been dramatically altered like aggregate extraction areas. But, aggregate extraction permitting for all aggregate activities occurring today requires that the site be rehabilitated by the permit holder before the licence can be surrendered and the property sold for other uses. In these instances, the corporations that hold the permit must bear the cost of rehabilitation. Some of the historical aggregate areas were worked out before there were mandated requirements for post-rehabilitation, unlike the stringent requirements attached to aggregate extraction permits from 1990 on as a result of the introduction of the the Aggregate Resources Act (ARA). While many of these lands have repaired themselves through natural succession, open “scars” remain on some properties. The Ontario Stone Sand & Gravel Association recognizes the impact of these non-rehabilitated aggregate sites. When the ARA was put into effect, the aggregate industry represented by the now Ontario Stone Sand & Gravel Association (OSSGA)(formerly the Aggregate Producers Association of Ontario) agreed that \$0.005 per tonne of license fees payable would be dedicated to a program having the purpose of rehabilitating these former extraction sites. These fees have been increased to \$0.011 per tonne (OSSGA, 2012). Based on recent levels of extraction in Ontario, an approximate amount of \$400,000 to \$600,000 is made available on an annual basis for this purpose, and is administered by The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation (TOARC). These monies are held in a dedicated account known as the Abandoned Pits & Quarries Rehabilitation Fund. In addition to the rehabilitation of abandoned pits and quarries, undertaken by the Management of Abandoned Aggregate Properties Program (MAAP), monies from the fund also supports research into ways and means of undertaking new and creative approaches to rehabilitation in the often harsh environments created in post extraction sites. As a result, the rehabilitation of lands associated with historical aggregate extraction can be subsidized through this program.

For these reasons, properties associated with aggregate extraction have not been excluded from the development of the Land Acquisition Target Areas that follow. Secondary land acquisition target areas have also been identified in this Land Acquisition Strategy that include a number of key clusters of lands that have a history of aggregate extraction, are currently in aggregate production, or are properties with valid aggregate permits in place but not currently in active production.

4.1.7 Ministry of Transportation Landholdings – Hwy. 407 Route

The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been working through the planning process for the extension of the Hwy. 407 east from its current end point at Brock Street in the northern end of

the Town of Pickering to Hwy. 115 in the north-eastern portion of the Municipality of Clarington. The environmental assessment has been completed, and the route finalized. The finalized route cuts west to east, roughly through the centre of CLOCA's jurisdiction. The routes for two north-south links from Hwy. 401 to the more northern location of Hwy. 407 have also been finalized, with the west link running parallel to Lakeridge Road in the Town of Whitby, and the east link running north in the vicinity of Holt Road in the Municipality of Clarington. It is expected that the first phase of construction from Brock Street to Harmony Road in the City of Oshawa will be completed in 2015, while the second phase from Harmony Road to Hwy. 35/115 will be completed in 2020.

To facilitate the construction of Hwy. 407, MTO continues to negotiate the acquisition of the lands on which Hwy. 407 and the north-south links will be constructed. In most cases, only lands upon which the highway will be physically built have been acquired. However, on occasion, MTO has had to acquire large parcels of land where only a portion of the property will be impacted by the highway construction. The majority of these surplus lands will be used to fulfil the EA commitment for vegetation restoration. However, there may be some opportunity for CLOCA to negotiate with MTO for the acquisition of lands that lie within the vicinity of one of the key Land Acquisition Target Areas that are identified below. In particular, there may be opportunities to acquire surplus lands within the Lynde Shores area, the Audley Road Woods area, the Heber Down area, the Black/Harmony/Farewell wetland complex area, and the Stephen's Gulch area. For this reason, CLOCA has considered the Hwy. 407 lands that have been acquired, or that are currently in the negotiation phase, in the development of the Land Acquisition Target Areas that follow.

4.2 Primary and Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas

In recognition of the many challenges and opportunities associated with land acquisition, this strategy has grouped land acquisition target areas into two main categories – Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas, and Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas.

Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas contain lands with the highest natural heritage value, and satisfy many of the parameters discussed in the preceding sections. In most cases, the primary target areas represent core habitats (islands of green) that function as cornerstones to CLOCA's existing natural heritage system, and must remain as such in order to ensure a functional natural heritage system continues to exist in the future. For these reasons, these core areas and their surrounding lands have become key targets for CLOCA land acquisition efforts. Acquisition of these lands by CLOCA has been recommended in order to guarantee an adequate level of natural heritage protection over the long-term. The majority of these primary target areas have existing CLOCA owned conservation lands at their core. Primary land acquisition target area boundaries have been delineated with regard to the information and parameters discussed in the preceding sections, and include such factors as:

- Containing existing natural heritage features/functions of high value;
- Providing a significant buffering capacity to adjacent lands of high natural heritage value;
- Having a high potential for natural heritage restoration (if required);
- Is contiguous with existing conservation lands or other public lands, or has the potential to become part of a connected conservation landholding as the land acquisition strategy is successfully implemented over time.

Eleven Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas have been identified through this strategy, and are briefly described in the proceeding sub-sections (Figure 5). While many land parcels of high natural heritage value can be found within the boundaries of the Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas, other parcels within the vicinity of these target areas may also be worthy of consideration for acquisition, but have not been specifically identified in this strategy for one reason or another. With this in mind, **all properties that are brought forward to CLOCA for acquisition should be considered on their own merits, and not just on the basis of whether or not they have been specifically identified within a land acquisition target area.**

Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas represent collections of land that should be considered for acquisition by CLOCA in order to ensure there is adequate natural connectivity between the “islands of green” identified within the Primary Land Acquisition Target Areas (Figure 5 and 6). Recognizing the size of our jurisdiction, achieving continuous connections will be challenging, if not impossible. However, this should not discourage public land acquisition in these corridors when the opportunity arises. The corridor connection acquisition areas include the Oak Ridges Moraine Regional Corridor Land Acquisition Target Area, which has been divided into 3 units being west, central and east. Additional emphasis has been placed on this particular Secondary Land Acquisition Target Area, capitalizing on the Oak Ridges Moraine legislation, which emphasizes the need to maintain the Oak Ridges Moraine as a continuous natural landform that will continue to protect the ecological and hydrological integrity of the Moraine for future generations. The Region of Durham Official Plan implements the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and supports land securement as a means of protecting and enhancing the Region’s natural environment. Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas also highlight where natural corridors could connect CLOCA’s core areas with protected natural spaces that lie nearby in adjacent conservation authority jurisdictions. The secondary land acquisition target areas that suggest establishing corridor connections to core habitat areas outside of CLOCA’s jurisdiction, have been called “Partner Land Acquisition Opportunities” in this strategy to highlight the role that partner agencies (including regional and local municipalities, and adjacent conservation authorities) need to play in the long-term protection of these more regional land acquisition target areas (Figure 7). Partner Land Acquisition Opportunities have also been identified in some areas within the CLOCA jurisdiction, and highlight areas where municipal partners can play a lead role in protecting the more restricted natural corridors in the southern portion of the jurisdiction (north-south valleylands through the urban centres). While no less important in the maintenance of a strong connected natural heritage system over the long-term, the Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas are less specific about which parcels should be acquired, and instead provide more general recommendations on where corridor connections should be established to ensure long-term natural connectivity between core habitat areas. In many locations, concentrations of lands with high natural heritage value have been included in these secondary target areas. In other locations, lands with existing natural cover do not readily exist, so instead the lands included in these more general target areas generally have high potential for natural heritage restoration, or have a type of ownership that is conducive to long-term land assembly initiatives. Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas are generally described in this strategy under a number of different names including:

- Corridor Connection Acquisition Target Areas
- Aggregate Extraction Acquisition Target Areas
- Partner Land Acquisition Opportunities
- Hwy. 407 Areas of Interest.

Select Secondary Land Acquisition Target Areas are briefly described in Section 4.2.2.

4.2.1 Primary Land Acquisition Target Area Descriptions

Long Sault Acquisition Target Area –

Long Sault Conservation Area is a 642Ha (1586ac) property located within the heart of the provincially significant Oak Ridges Moraine in the northeast corner of CLOCA's jurisdiction. Long Sault Conservation Area is one of the largest properties owned by CLOCA, and is one of the largest publicly owned natural spaces in the area. The Long Sault Forest, together with the East Cross Forest area to the north make up an important core habitat within CLOCA's NHS as well as the regional NHS. The Long Sault Acquisition Target Area includes parcels that contain significant natural heritage features, or are considered to be important to the long term maintenance of the natural heritage system within and surrounding the existing Long Sault Conservation Area land holdings. Parcels that are contiguous with the Long Sault Conservation Area land holdings are also a priority. Large portions of the Long Sault Acquisition Target Area are considered Regional Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (Long Sault Forest Area of Natural and Scientific Interest and Tyrone Valley Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) largely because of the extensive and largely unfragmented forest and wetland area. The diversity of high quality habitats makes the Long Sault area important to the watersheds wildlife population. Strong natural connections that extend along the valleylands to the south and to the north (towards East Cross) and east (towards Ganaraska Forest) further reinforce the significance of this area as a regional core wildlife habitat area. The Long Sault Acquisition Target Area represents an extremely important focus area for future acquisition, as this area possesses significant natural features (whether provincially identified or of local significance), represents a significant core wildlife habitat area, has sensitive groundwater features and/or functions, the headwater tributaries of the Bowmanville/Soper Creek Watershed arise from these lands, important corridor functions between natural features are provided (i.e. valleylands), and the lands are within the provincially significant Oak Ridges Moraine.

Enniskillen Valley Acquisition Target Area –

The Enniskillen Valley Acquisition Target Area is located only a few kilometers to the southwest of Long Sault Conservation Area in a headwater area of the Bowmanville Creek. The properties identified for future acquisition in this area are focused around Enniskillen Conservation Area (657Ha, 1623ac), which now occupies much of the Enniskillen Valley north of Regional Road #3 as a result of recent acquisition efforts. The core of this valley is largely undisturbed from residential development, and gives rise to the headwaters of the western branch of the Bowmanville Creek. This area has long been identified as a focus area for acquisition by CLOCA; however, until 2004 there was little opportunity to increase the amount of land in public ownership around Enniskillen Conservation Area. The Enniskillen Valley Land Assembly Project represents one of the most active land securement projects in CLOCA's recent history with the acquisition of over 594 ha in 10 years. The purchase of the Sanderson Tract (87 hectares) in July 2004, made possible with support from the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, provided CLOCA with the needed foothold in the largely isolated and undisturbed valley directly to the north of the original landholding that represented the original Enniskillen Conservation Area. Negotiations to purchase additional parcels of property within this significant valley are also underway, and CLOCA fully expects to continue its success in this area over the long-term.

Property parcels identified within the Enniskillen Valley Acquisition Target Area have been chosen according to two main criteria: those parcels contiguous with the existing Enniskillen Conservation Area boundary on both the north and south sides of Regional Road #3; and those with high natural heritage value. While significant portions of this extensive valley system have been secured between Concession Road 7 and Concession Road 9, additional lands of high natural heritage value remain around the periphery. The areas north of Concession Road 9, along the main headwaters of the Bowmanville Creek, have also been targeted due to their significant ecological value to the watershed. The acquisition of the remaining parcels within the Enniskillen Valley Acquisition Target Area would ensure that this section of the Bowmanville Creek, and respective valley area, would be adequately buffered from surrounding land uses. By allowing for a more extensive naturalized area, this valley section would better function as a wildlife corridor connecting other valley corridors to the south with this large natural valley and the rest of the Oak Ridges Moraine. This extensive valley area also provides an important role in supporting the natural east-west connectivity that exists along this section of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Acquisition within the Enniskillen Valley Acquisition Target Area should continue to be actively pursued while further development within this area continues to be limited.

Enfield Wetlands Acquisition Target Area

The Enfield Wetland Acquisition Target Area is a new focal area for CLOCA acquisition efforts, confirmed by the recent purchase of 2 properties (87Ha, 216ac). Considering the parameters for selecting acquisition areas that are discussed in sections above, the Enfield Wetland complex and connecting lands became an obvious target for future acquisition efforts when all of the supporting data was analyzed. Apart from being an area that contains provincially significant wetland, the area is also considered to be a core wildlife habitat having large unfragmented swaths of forest and swamp. These elements contribute to this area's inclusion in CLOCA's NHS. This Acquisition Target Area falls within a headwater section of the Oshawa Creek watershed and crosses into the headwaters of Harmony and Farewell Creek watersheds. Given the location of this land acquisition target area, good opportunities exist to establish secondary connections to the Enniskillen Valley to the east, and east-west regional corridors along this portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine. While this target area is reasonably large, large parcels with relatively few individual owners increases the feasibility of successfully acquiring large portions of this target area.

Stephen's Gulch Acquisition Target Area -

Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area is located on the Lake Iroquois Beach physiographic unit along the eastern boundary of the CLOCA jurisdiction. One of the mid-sized conservation areas owned by CLOCA (143Ha, 353ac), Stephen's Gulch contains a large amount of high environmentally sensitive area. Like many areas along the Lake Iroquois Beach physiographic unit, this conservation area contains land that is extremely important to the groundwater cycle, acting as both a recharge and discharge zone for the Soper Creek watershed whose creek and associated valley pass directly through Stephen's Gulch Conservation Area.

Much of the northern half of the Conservation Area, and some of the surrounding properties, have been designated as a provincially significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. As a result, land included in the Stephen's Gulch Acquisition Target Area includes those properties that are adjacent to the existing land holdings, and/or contain portions of the Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. Efforts to secure further portions of the Soper Creek valley will be made. Pressure on the Stephen's Gulch area is expected to dramatically increase in the next several years as the urban

expansion of Bowmanville (only kilometers to the south) continues to move northward at a quick rate. As a result, acquisition within this area is a priority in an effort to better protect the sensitive natural features in Stephen's Gulch and Soper Creek from further fragmentation and disturbance.

Bowmanville / Westside Marshes Acquisition Target Area -

The Bowmanville and Westside Marshes Conservation Area (66Ha, 164ac) is located at the mouth of the Bowmanville/Soper Creek watershed along the shores of Lake Ontario. Both marshes are examples of coastal wetlands, a type of wetland habitat that is considerably rarer along the Greater Toronto Area waterfront due to urban and industrial development. Westside Marsh, a provincially significant wetland has undergone some major alterations as a result of a recent expansion of the existing quarry activities that occur directly to the west. As part of the aggregate expansion, the remaining portion of the Westside Marsh has been donated to CLOCA along with the adjoining upland between Westside Marsh and Bowmanville Marsh. As a result, restoration activities within this upland property have begun to provide a more natural corridor connection to the locally significant Bowmanville Marsh directly to the east. No further CLOCA acquisition areas have currently been identified within the areas surrounding CLOCA's current land holdings at this time. Efforts by CLOCA in the area will instead be placed on restoration activities within these existing lands.

Although CLOCA does not have any acquisition targets within this area, it fully supports efforts being carried out by the Municipality of Clarington to acquire lands along the Lake Ontario shoreline on both the east and west sides of the Bowmanville and Soper Creek outlet / Bowmanville harbour entrance. It is the Municipality of Clarington's intent to establish a more formal park setting, protect erosion prone shoreline, and undertake dune restoration along the sensitive portions of the barrier beach. CLOCA will work with the municipality to ensure appropriate connections are made available between the public landholdings within the Bowmanville / Westside Marshes area.

Black/Harmony/Farewell Wetland Acquisition Target Area -

The Black/Harmony/Farewell Wetland Acquisition Target Area is a new acquisition focus area. A high concentration of features with high natural heritage value encouraged CLOCA to consider acquisition initiatives within this highly sensitive area. The provincially significant wetland designation that covers the majority of the land included in this acquisition target area reinforces the significance of the areas wetlands, the largely intact forest cover, the ground water recharge and discharge functions, and the core wildlife habitat within this portion of the Lake Iroquois Beach physiographic unit. While the construction of the Hwy. 407 East Link through this acquisition area does present some limitations on connectivity from east to west, it also presents opportunities in terms of potential for acquiring some of the surplus lands that may become available in the area post construction. Intensive development through much of the Lake Iroquois Beach west of this target area makes protection of this relatively intact section of this significant physiographic unit a priority for CLOCA.

Purple Woods Acquisition Target Area -

Located atop the Oak Ridges Moraine in a Natural Linkage Area, Purple Woods Conservation Area which includes the Rahmani Tract (45Ha, 110ac) are part of an environmentally sensitive area that is well known for its role as a major groundwater recharge zone. Given the central location of this area along the northern boundary of the CLOCA jurisdiction, both lands are important components of a more regional east-west corridor of forest cover along the Oak Ridges Moraine, linking the

Chalk Lake and Nonquon Headwater forest area in the west to the Long Sault Forest area in the east.

Extension services (i.e. stewardship projects and educational programs) will be the focus in the estate residential areas south of the Rahmani Tract. However, property acquisition remains the most secure means for CLOCA to protect significant features over the long term. The Purple Woods Acquisition Area includes properties that contain some of the least disturbed headwater areas within the Oshawa Creek watershed. Acquisition of these properties would allow for the long-term protection of a large relatively unfragmented forested area, a type of wildlife habitat that has become increasingly rare within the Oshawa Creek watershed and along this portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Opportunities to acquire land to the east of Purple Woods Conservation Area are limited at this time; however, opportunities to acquire additional properties should not be overlooked if they became available in the future.

Crow's Pass Acquisition Target Area –

Chalk Lake, a provincial Area of Natural and Scientific Interest located only a short distance to the south of Crow's Pass Conservation Area, has long been an area identified for long term acquisition by CLOCA. However, until the purchase of the Crow's Pass Conservation Area (85Ha, 210ac) in 2003, no opportunities to purchase property in this sensitive area were previously pursued. Since 2003, an adjacent 20Ha, 50ac parcel was purchased (Morehen Tract) and in 2014, CLOCA received a very generous donation of 178Ha, 440ac of land just to the north of Crows Pass (Rogers Tract), increasing the size of this Conservation Area to 264Ha, 652ac). The Crow's Pass Acquisition Target Area identifies properties that would be considered for acquisition in two general areas: those properties on the undeveloped southern shore of Chalk Lake where the majority of the provincially significant Chalk Lake Area of Natural and Scientific Interest remains relatively undisturbed, and a large group of properties north of the Crow's Pass Conservation Area that contain a large portion of the regionally significant Nonquon Headwaters Area of Natural and Scientific Interest, and the Nonquon Provincially Significant Wetland. In addition to their significance as provincially and regionally significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, this area is designated Oak Ridges Moraine Natural Core Area. Given their location on the Oak Ridges Moraine, this area is extremely important because of the role it plays in the groundwater cycle, providing both recharge and discharge functions to both the Lynde Creek watershed to the south and the Nonquon River subwatershed to the north. These large and relatively unfragmented forested areas are also extremely important as core wildlife habitat areas and provide strong east-west natural connectivity along this portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Together with the extensive public lands directly to the west, including Durham Regional Forest and numerous tracts owned by Toronto Region Conservation Authority, the lands within the Crow's Pass Acquisition Target Areas (if acquired) would add considerably to an extremely important publicly owned natural space within the central portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Heber Down Acquisition Target Area & Audley Road Woods Acquisition Target Area –

Heber Down Conservation Area (280Ha, 692ac) is located on the Lake Iroquois Beach physiographic unit, which is environmentally sensitive due to the role it plays in the groundwater recharge and discharge cycle. Springs and seeps are evident along much of the Lynde Creek forested valley. A large portion of the Conservation Area has been designated as provincially significant wetland. Due to the rapid urban expansion of Brooklin to the northeast and Whitby to the south, opportunities for future acquisition surrounding this conservation area are somewhat limited to parcels directly surrounding the Conservation Area. These properties are targeted for

acquisition because of their proximity to the Heber Down Conservation Area and for the opportunity to better protect portions of the Lynde Creek and its respective valleylands.

Located on the Lake Iroquois Beach physiographic unit at the western extreme of the CLOCA jurisdiction, Audley Road Woods (13 Ha, 33ac) lies only a couple of kilometers to the west of Heber Down Conservation Area, and several kilometers to the east of Greenwood Conservation Area (and other parcels owned by the Toronto Region Conservation Authority). Given its location between these two large publicly owned natural spaces on the sensitive Iroquois Beach (due to its large role in groundwater cycling, and the provision of treed swamp habitat) the Audley Road Woods Land Acquisition Target Area includes properties that contain relatively undisturbed and undeveloped natural features. Acquisition of these parcels would also ensure that east-west connectivity with Heber Down Conservation Area (to the east) would continue to exist over the long term. Considering the speeds at which east-west natural corridors are being removed to allow way for further urban development through much of the Lake Iroquois Beach, establishing a connected natural corridor in this vicinity is extremely important. Construction of the west Hwy. 407 link through the eastern portion of this target area may compromise the ability to establish a strong connection, but acquiring ownership of key surplus MTO lands in the area may help future acquisition efforts in the area.

Lynde Shores Acquisition Target Area –

Lynde Shores Conservation Area (387Ha, 956ac) is located in the southwest corner of the CLOCA jurisdiction, surrounding the point where Lynde Creek outlets into Lake Ontario. Designated as provincially significant wetlands, Lynde Creek Marsh and Cranberry Marsh (both protected within the current conservation area boundaries) are important examples of coastal wetland habitats. Many of the natural Lake Ontario coastal wetlands that were once common within the Greater Toronto Area have been lost or heavily altered over the years. This widespread loss and alteration of coastal wetlands reinforces the current significance of both Lynde Creek Marsh and Cranberry Marsh to the regional natural heritage system. The two marshes, and connecting upland, provide extremely important core habitat for migrating waterfowl and other coastal wetland specialist species in an area where industrial and urban development have left few other examples along this intensively used waterfront. A long term acquisition plan was developed for this area over a decade ago with the hopes of better protecting the areas significant and sensitive natural heritage features from increasing pressure as a result of a rapid conversion of largely agricultural lands, to a mix of residential, commercial, institutional, intensive recreational, and transportation infrastructure related land uses. The acquisition plan identified parcels of property that, if acquired, would limit further development adjacent to the coastal marshes, and better buffer these natural areas from the damaging side effects of more intensive land uses. Other parcels were identified for acquisition to the west of Cranberry Marsh in order to protect the area known as the Ajax Warbler Swamp complex, a provincially significant wetland. Great efforts have been made to carry out this acquisition plan in the last several years, and have resulted in the addition of several new tracts that are contiguous with Lynde Shores Conservation Area. The Lynde Shores Land Acquisition Target Area found within this acquisition strategy reflects recent purchases, and refines the remaining acquisition targets. The emphasis for future acquisition within this area focuses on establishing solid corridor connections to other significant natural heritage features to the west. Efforts to acquire the remaining parcels identified within the long term acquisition plan

should continue in order to provide the largest buffer possible around this truly unique natural area that exists within an otherwise largely urban area.

4.2.2 Secondary Land Acquisition Target Area Descriptions

Corridor Connection Acquisition Target Areas –

This Secondary Land Acquisition Target Area recognizes the need to secure strong connected corridors between core conservation land holdings. Within these corridors exists a concentration of natural heritage features and lands identified for restoration through CLOCA's natural heritage system modeling exercise. Protecting a natural corridor of reasonable size between core habitat areas would significantly enhance wildlife movement opportunities within and through the jurisdiction.

There are two key types of Corridor Connection Acquisition Target Areas, regional landscape corridors and local watershed corridors. The Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM) represents the regional landscape corridor, offering connectivity through and beyond CLOCA's jurisdiction. This is a vast corridor, which has been separated into 3 geographic areas – West, Central and East ORM Corridor (Figure 6). Each of these corridor areas connects CLOCA core land holdings. In an effort to achieve and protect corridor functions, acquisition along the Oak Ridges Moraine will be a focus for CLOCA in addition to the primary land acquisition target areas.

The local watershed corridors provide opportunities to secure corridor protection in the eastern part of the jurisdiction between Stephen's Gulch and Long Sault Conservation Acquisition Target Areas, and between Enniskillen and the Black/Harmony/Farewell Wetland Land Acquisition Target Areas. An additional local watershed corridor has been identified between Stephen's Gulch and the Black/Harmony/Farewell Wetland Land Acquisition Target Areas. These local watershed corridors satisfy the greatest number of parameters for selecting acquisition areas. However, if an opportunity to protect other connections or linkages arises, they shall not be dismissed solely based upon the fact that they are not identified on the mapping.

Mosport Corridor Aggregate Extraction Acquisition Target Area –

The Secondary Land Acquisition Target Area referred to in this strategy as the Mosport Corridor Aggregate Extraction Acquisition Target Area is meant to highlight the largely contiguous landholdings that are currently permitted for aggregate extraction through this corridor. As discussed in Section 4.1.6, large areas of contiguous aggregate extraction landholdings should still be considered within a conservation land acquisition strategy because of the potential opportunity that they present. While it may be many years, if not decades for some properties, all of these permitted aggregate extraction areas will have to be rehabilitated at some point in time by the individual companies who own the parcels. It is in the interest of the stakeholders, including conservation authorities, local municipalities, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, and the aggregate producers who own and operate these pits, to work together to develop a coordinated approach to rehabilitation that results in a more seamless and restored landscape across this portion of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Tax benefits could also be realized by the various aggregate producers who own these lands should they be willing to consider transferring ownership of these lands to one of the local conservation organizations. If this secondary land acquisition initiative were realized over the long-term, the result would be the creation of a robust natural corridor connection between the Long Sault / East Cross Forest area and the Ganaraska Forest to the east.

Partner Land Acquisition Opportunities -

CLOCA has identified a number of secondary partner land acquisition targets in areas around the jurisdiction where further opportunities for municipal ownership exist in these corridors. For example, many of the large valleylands bordering the main branches of the watersheds within CLOCA's jurisdiction (largely within the urbanized areas) are well vegetated and are key elements in maintaining connected north-south wildlife corridors. While maintaining strong north-south wildlife corridors and vegetated riparian areas is important to CLOCA, large portions of these important valleylands are owned and actively managed by local municipalities and in many instances, are integral to the local community because they provide trails and passive recreational opportunities. As a result, CLOCA has not targeted any major urban/urbanizing valleylands for future acquisition due to their current levels of protection, unless they are part of a larger Land Acquisition Target Area. CLOCA believes in securing ownership of these key corridor areas, but will look to our municipal partners in most cases to achieve this goal.

Land acquisition has primarily been discussed within this document as a means to protect environmentally significant natural heritage lands, and to regenerate and rehabilitate degraded areas. But, public land acquisition can also be used to provide relief from natural hazards including flooding and erosion. In some instances land acquisition can be used as a tool to remove the public from hazardous locations such as flood damage centres and Lake Ontario shoreline erosion sites. Acquisition of hazard land should be coordinated with the partner municipalities, who are delegated the responsibility of developing plans to limit the risk to public safety or property damage.

Hwy. 407 Areas of Interest -

CLOCA has reviewed the land holdings that will be acquired by the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to support the construction of the eastern extension of Hwy. 407 through CLOCA's jurisdiction. Recognizing that MTO has, and will continue to acquire lands to accommodate this project, CLOCA has identified Hwy. 407 Areas of interest in areas along the future route where there may be opportunities to acquire certain lands that may be disposed of by MTO in the future, when they are considered surplus to the highway construction process. Certain lands owned by MTO within these areas of interest could become important connector parcels in the long-term acquisition efforts within and around the primary land acquisition target areas that are located through the Iroquois Beach zone including Audley Road Woods, Heber Down, Black/Harmony/Farewell Wetland, Stephen's Gulch, and Mount Hope Conservation Area.

5.0 METHODS OF LAND SECUREMENT

A case by case assessment will be undertaken by CLOCA to determine the quality and significance of the resources or function of properties considered for acquisition. Based on the individual property assessment, CLOCA will determine whether acquisition will be pursued. Under this acquisition strategy, the primary method that CLOCA has used in the past, and will continue to use for protecting environmentally sensitive and significant lands, is by holding title (fee simple) either by purchase or donation. Properties being purchased may be listed on the open real estate market or they may be properties where the landowner has approached the Authority looking to sell their

lands. It is understood that participants will be willing buyers and willing sellers. The value of the land will be determined by a property appraisal, details of which are provided in Appendix 2.

CLOCA encourages donations of land. These gifts, at appraised value, may qualify as charitable donations under the Federal Income Tax Act. CLOCA, as a charitable organization, can accept donations of land and issue a charitable tax receipt for the appraised value of the property. CLOCA has also been designated by the Minister of the Environment to accept donations through the Ecogifts Program. More information on the Ecogifts Program is contained in Appendix 3. CLOCA, in pursuing donations of land or property rights, will work with municipalities, environmental organizations, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Fund and other potential funding partners in order to secure environmentally significant/sensitive lands.

There are many different methods used by environmental organizations to protect the significant natural features found on a particular property. Information about these different methods is provided in Appendix 1.

6.0 PROGRAM FUNDING

Over the last decade, CLOCA has been extremely successful in securing funds from various sources for land acquisitions and the associated costs. While successful, CLOCA has had to be creative in some years to ensure the necessary funds could be generated for certain acquisitions projects. This creativity has had to increase over the last few years, and given the current economic outlook, it is anticipated that finding the appropriate funds for land acquisition will continue to be a challenge. Over the last decade, CLOCA has successfully leveraged land acquisition funding from all levels of government (federal, provincial, upper-tier municipality, and lower-tier municipalities), provincial foundations and trusts (Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, and the Ontario Heritage Trust), not for profit land trusts, not for profit conservation organizations (Nature Conservancy of Canada, and Ducks Unlimited Canada), and the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Fund.

The purchase of fee simple interests and receiving land donations is dependent on CLOCA's ability to raise funds to facilitate not only the land purchase costs (including land costs, legal, appraisal, survey, environmental audits, demolition and property clean up, land transfer tax), but also the funds required to secure the property immediately after purchase, undertake inventories and develop management plans for those lands, undertake restoration/stewardship activities, and ensure there is adequate resources to manage the property over the long-term. Given the financial requirements associated with land acquisition, only the most suitable lands available through donation, purchase, or other arrangement may be acquired in any given year.

6.1 Funding Alternatives

The following sections outline a variety of potential funding sources for CLOCA's land acquisition program. The following discussion recognizes current funding sources. However, going forward, it is anticipated that there will be a growing reliance on Municipal support as traditional sources of

funding diminish. While the organizations that CLOCA have worked with in the past are identified below, it is not clear whether these sources of funding will continue to be available.

6.1.1 Municipal Funding

The conservation of lands benefits all municipalities within the CLOCA jurisdiction helping to ensure that the basic elements of the natural heritage system continue to function effectively. While maintaining a robust natural heritage system is important from an ecological point of view, recent analyses carried out within Ontario suggest that the ecological services provided by our natural heritage systems save governments millions of dollars annually. Conservation lands also provide open space opportunities that contribute to the enjoyment, health, and well-being of all residents. The conservation of the natural heritage system including issues related to the quantity and quality of water is of benefit to the people of the entire region and will contribute positively to the quality of life for future generations.

Where appropriate, upper and lower tier municipalities would be consulted to determine if there is funding available to support the land acquisition initiatives.

The Region of Durham has created a land acquisition policy titled “Durham Region Land Acquisition Policy for Conservation Authorities, 2007” for the acquisition of greenlands in the Region of Durham. It sets out environmental and financial criteria and is available to Conservation Authorities subject to project approval and annual funding allocation. Durham Region continues to be CLOCA’s largest financial supporter for land acquisition. The Town of Whitby also has a conservation land acquisition fund for the purposes of supporting acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands. CLOCA will continue to encourage our other partner municipalities to develop similar greenspace acquisition funds that can be accessed by CLOCA for conservation land acquisition programs within their respective municipalities.

6.1.2 Provincial Funding

Over the years, CLOCA has received provincial funding under Section 39 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The Authority intends to use monies received through this funding towards the acquisition of lands in accordance with this Strategy. In addition to this funding, CLOCA has been successful in obtaining funding from provincial programs that have been made available to Conservation Authorities and the land trust community for the securement of natural heritage lands. These have involved funding through the Natural Spaces Land Acquisition and Stewardship Program (ended in 2011) and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Greenlands Program in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (ended in 2007). These programs provided up to 50% funding for securement and stewardship projects.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation contributed significant dollars to CLOCA’s land acquisition efforts through the mid 2000’s, often contributing 1/3 of all of the acquisition costs. However, the Foundation has not had funding available for land acquisition for several years.

CLOCA will continue to participate in provincial funding programs as they become available.

6.1.3 Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC)

Over the past several years CLOCA has been successful in obtaining funding for land securement through DUC. DUC has been a significant financial supporter in the Lynde Shores Acquisition Target Area.

6.1.4 Partner Funding Support

The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority Foundation (CLOCF) has provided the necessary funds to help leverage matching dollars in several land acquisitions over the last several years. As securement opportunities arise the CLOCF will continue to be approached to provide leverage funding for the acquisition of natural heritage lands within CLOCA's jurisdiction.

FIGURES

FIGURE 1: CLOCA REGIONAL CONTEXT AND LANDHOLDINGS

FIGURE 2: POLICY CONTEXT

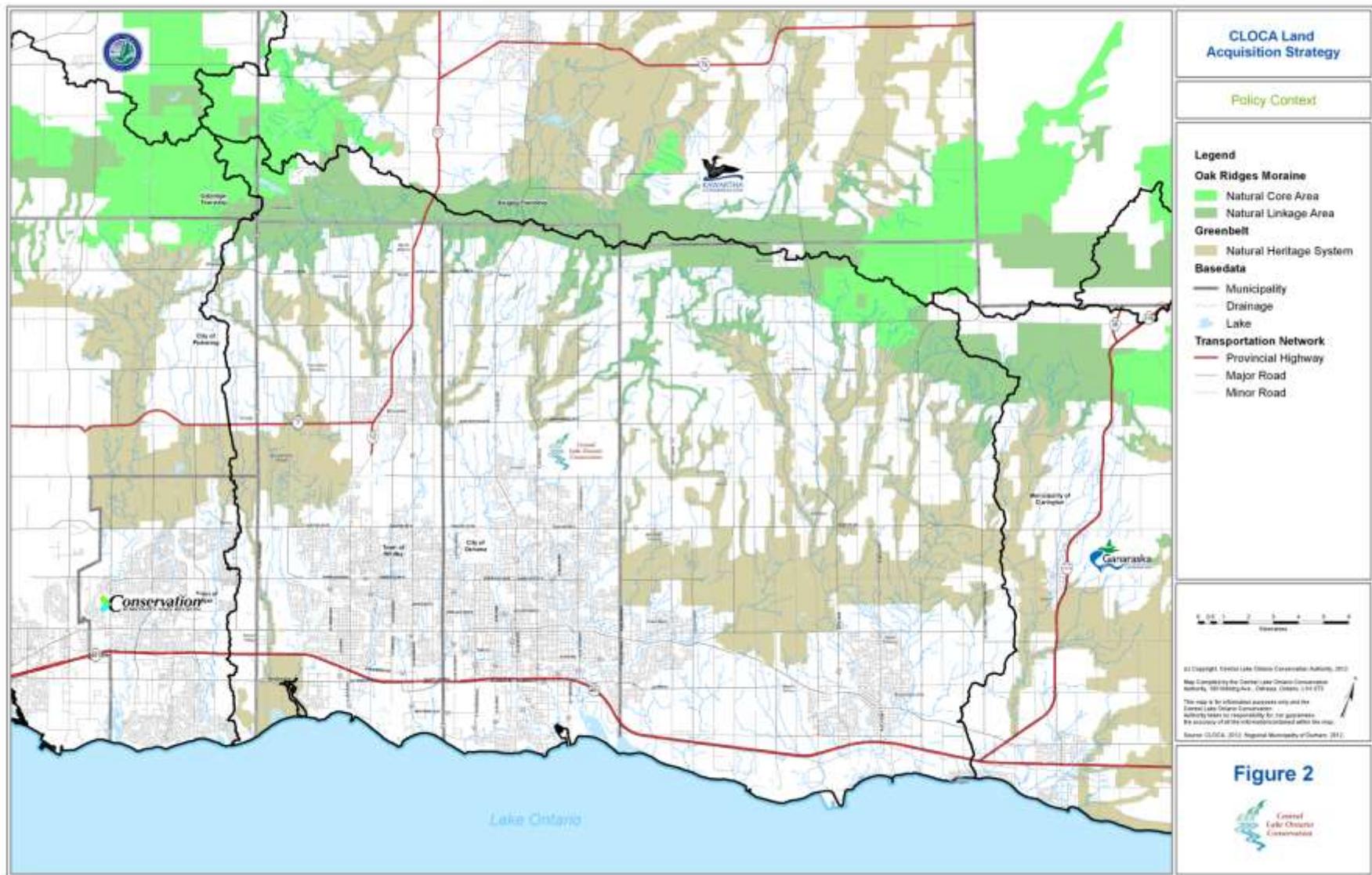
FIGURE 3: CLOCA RECOMMENDED AUTHORITY FOREST - 1964

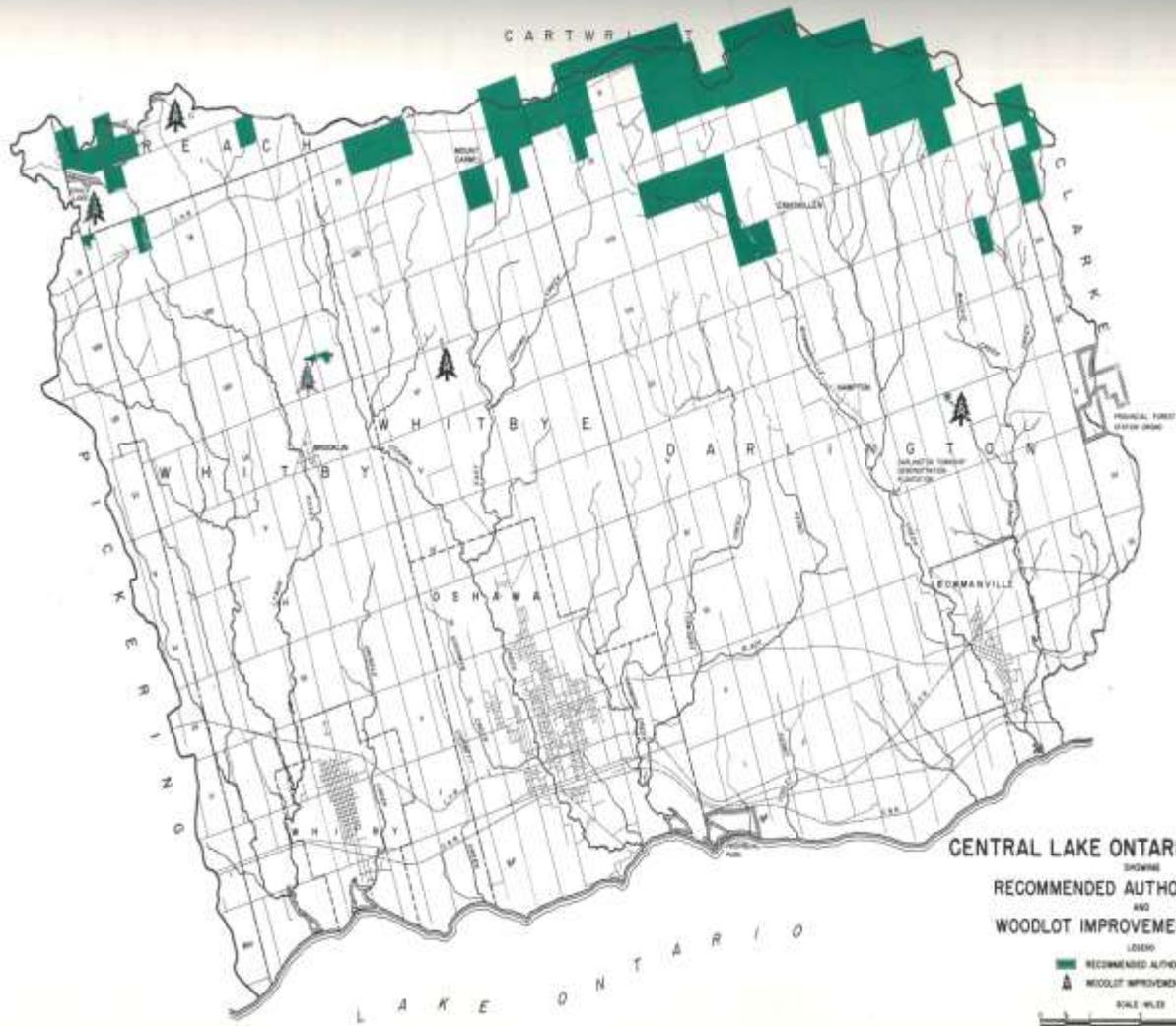
FIGURE 4: CLOCA PROPOSED REGIONAL PARKS PLAN - 1973

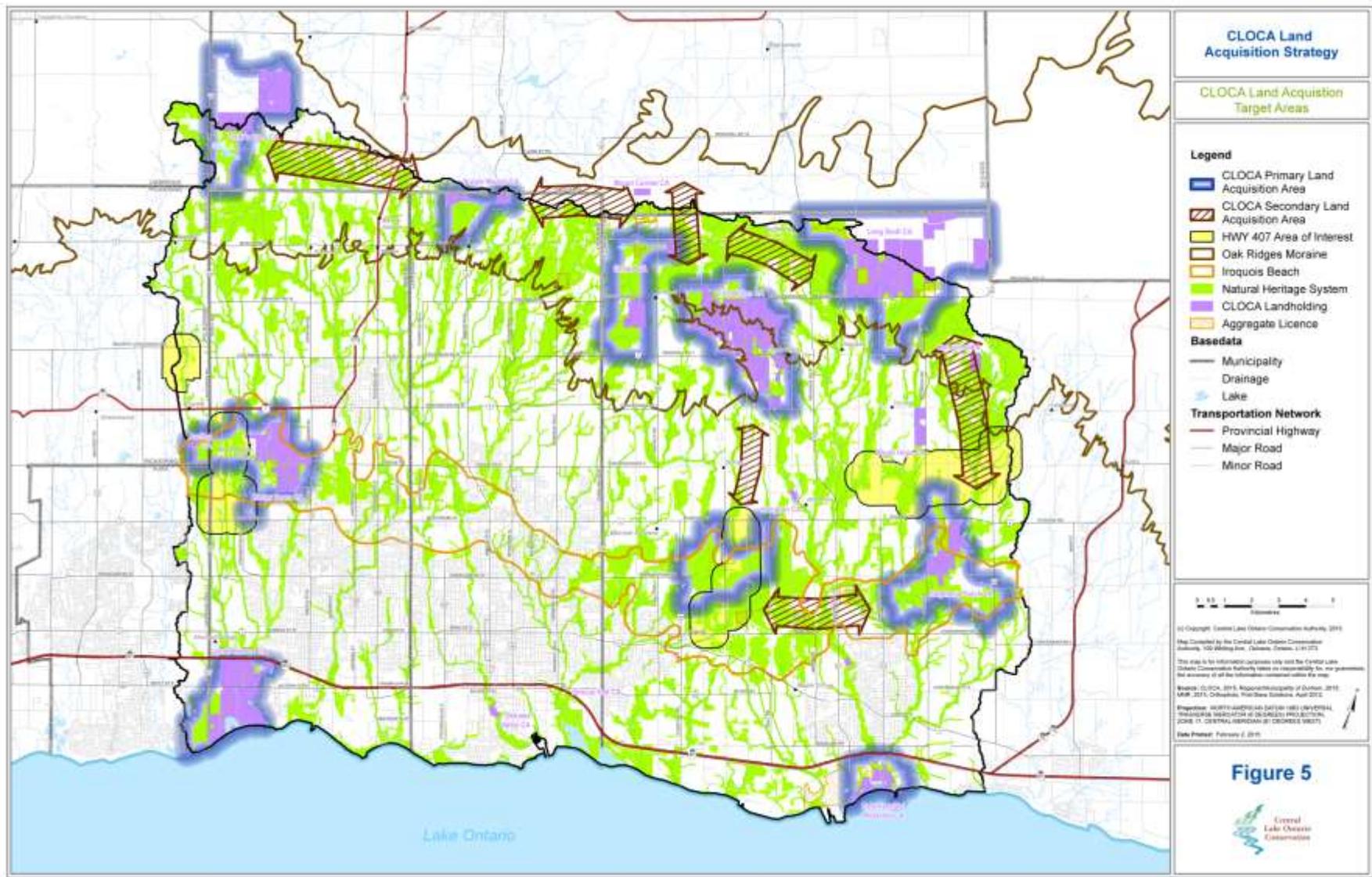
FIGURE 5: CLOCA LAND ACQUISITION TARGET AREAS

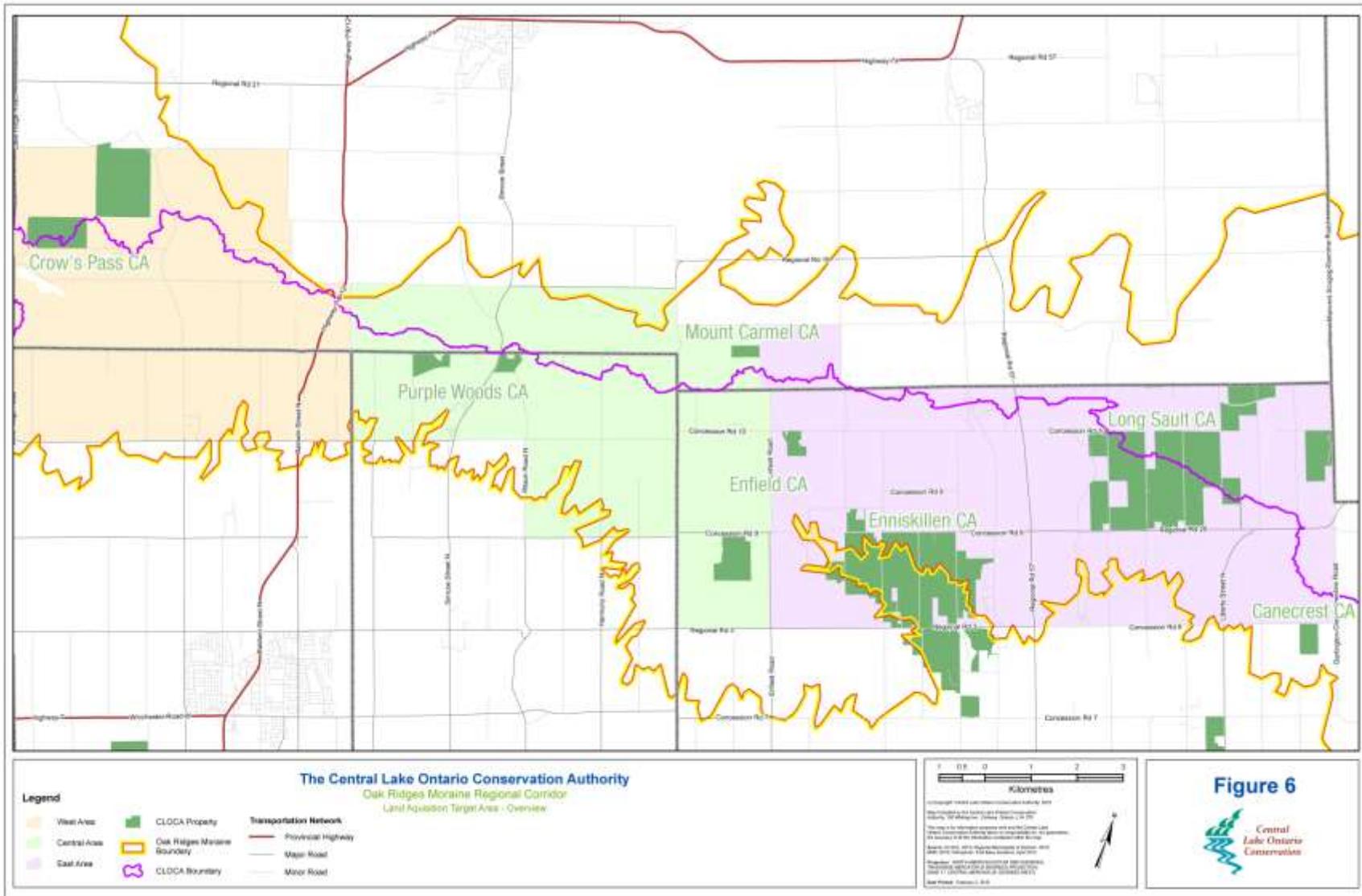
**FIGURE 6: OAK RIDGES MORaine REGIONAL CORRIDOR LAND ACQUISITION
TARGET AREA OVERVIEW**

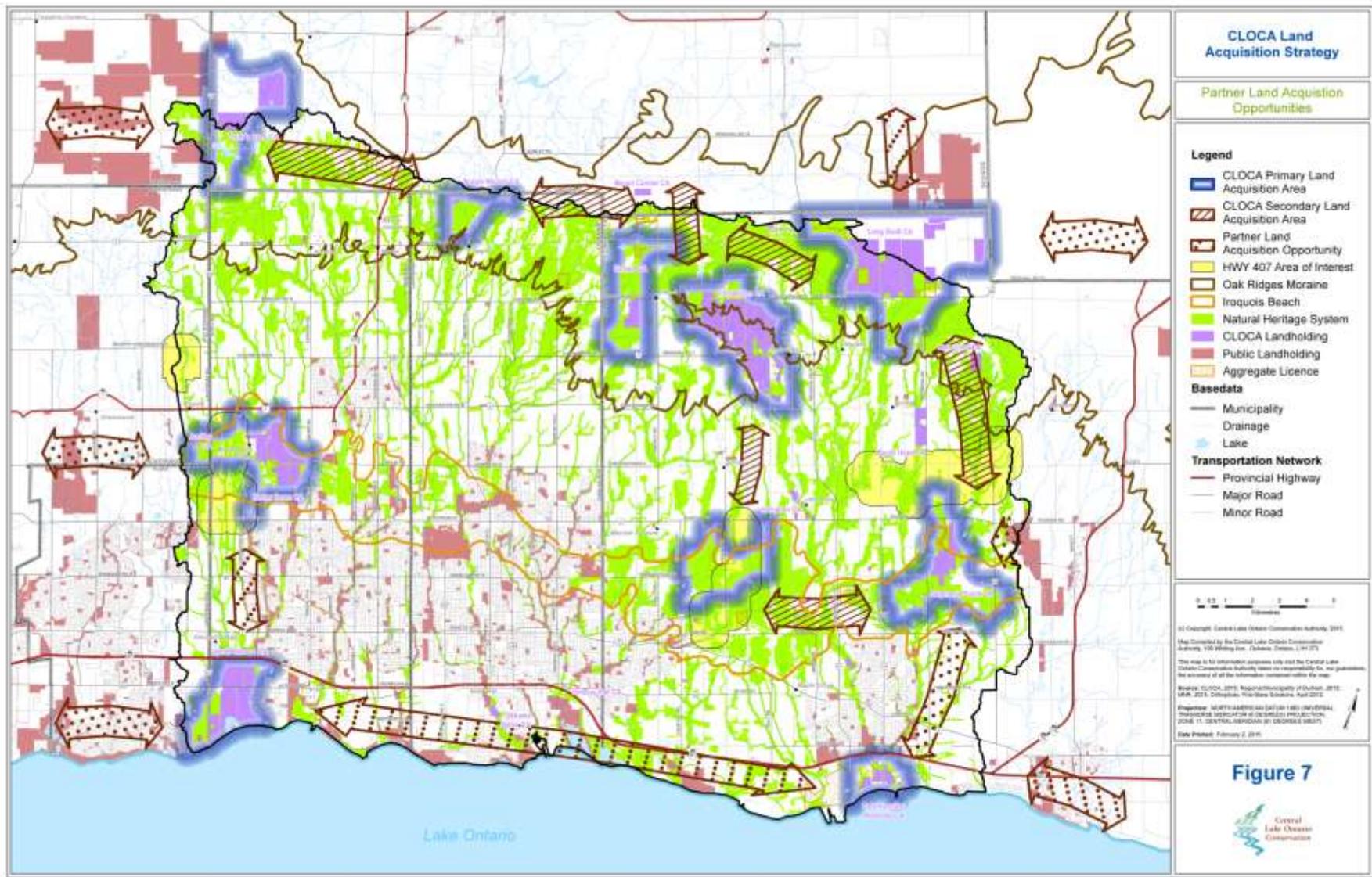
FIGURE 7: PARTNER LAND ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES











APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – FORMS and METHODS OF LAND SECUREMENT

APPENDIX 2 – PROPERTY EVALUATION PROCEDURES

APPENDIX 3 – ENVIRONMENT CANADA – ECOLOGICAL GIFTS PROGRAM

APPENDIX 4 – DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS LANDS

APPENDIX 5 – LANDOWNER CONTACT

APPENDIX 1 – FORMS and METHODS OF LAND SECUREMENT

There are many land securement methods by which natural features can be protected, but there are benefits and limitations associated with each form of land securement. The Conservation Authority would determine the most appropriate form of securement for a given property to ensure the protection of the features and functions of the land.

The following outlines the various methods which could be employed in the securement of environmentally sensitive or significant lands.

Fee Simple

This method is the purchase or donation of the total interest in a property. Full ownership is the most effective way for the protection of greenspace as the owner has full property rights over the land. This is the preferred method that CLOCA has used, and will use in future land acquisitions.

Purchase of full title and rights to a property, these are arm's length transactions with a willing buyer and a willing seller. These can be properties listed on the open real estate market or property transactions based on appraised property values identified through landowner contacts or specific landowner inquiries. For small properties or low value lands, the property value may be based on an appraisal letter of opinion or best offer from CLOCA.

An Option to Purchase is a contract that allows CLOCA to buy a property at a set price for a stipulated period of time. It is a written contract by the landowner to sell the property and not to withdraw this offer during the stipulated period of time. CLOCA would pay a fee for this option. This mechanism is often used by a conservation group as a means of "buying time" in its attempts to acquire a specific piece of land and is the perfect time to fundraise for the purchase costs.

Right to First Refusal is an agreement between a landowner and CLOCA, or other prospective buyer that gives CLOCA a chance to match any third party offer to buy a specific piece of property before it is sold. It sets out the conditions of sale and is registered on title to the property. There is a fee associated with the Right of First Refusal.

Donation

CLOCA encourages donations of land. These gifts, at appraised value, may qualify as charitable donations under the Federal Income Tax Act. CLOCA, as a charitable organization, can accept donations of land and issue a charitable tax receipt for the appraised value of the property. CLOCA also accepts donations through the Ecological Gifts Program which is administered by Environment Canada (Appendix 1). CLOCA, in pursuing donations of land or property rights, will work with municipalities, environmental organizations, the Central Lake Ontario Conservation Fund and other potential funding partners in order to secure environmentally significant/sensitive lands.

Several changes by the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA) have provided more tax incentives to landowners willing to donate ecologically sensitive lands. The 1995 federal budget provided for

amendments to the Income Tax Act to increase the 20% limitation in respect of charitable donations to 100% for certified donations made after February 27, 1995, to Canadian Municipalities and registered charities designated by the Minister of the Environment.

In May 2006, further changes were announced by the CRA that made all donations of ecologically sensitive lands through the federal Ecological Gifts (Ecogifts) Program exempt from capital gains tax. All lands donated outside of this program are still subject to capital gains. In addition, as part of the Ecogifts Program, all appraisals are reviewed by Environment Canada's expert panel of appraisers, therefore, landowners and CLOCA can be assured that the appraisal is accurate and legitimate. The advantages of the Ecological Gifts program are outlined in Appendix 1. CLOCA has been designated by the Minister of the Environment to accept donations through the Ecogifts Program.

Partial Takings / Direct Conveyance

This is an acquisition of part of a property in either a fee simple purchase or donation scenario. For example, if a landowner has a residence he/she may be willing to dispose of the majority of the property containing significant ecological features while retaining the residence and amenity area (i.e., landowner retains 5 acres, CLOCA receives 95 acres through purchase or donation). In 2004, the CLOCA Oak Ridges Moraine Long Term Land Acquisition Program received approval of the Minister of Natural Resources pursuant to Section 24 of the Conservation Authorities Act. Accordingly, approval of this program by the Minister enables the Authority to convey lands acquired for the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands (Section 50 (3) (e) of the Planning Act). When using this mechanism to acquire lands, the following declaration must be made at the Registry Office at time of closing.

“The land or any use of or right therein is being acquired for the purposes of flood control, erosion control, bank stabilization, shoreline management works or the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands under a project approved by the Minister of Natural Resources under Section 24 of the Conservation Authorities Act and in respect of which an officer of the conservation authority acquiring the land or any use of or right therein has made a declaration that it is being acquired for any of such purposes, which shall be conclusive evidence that it is being acquired for such purpose.”

The Planning Process

As part of CLOCA's involvement in the Plan Review process under the *Planning Act*, (i.e., Official Plan Amendments, Draft Plans of Subdivision, re-zoning and land severance applications) environmentally significant areas may be identified through supporting studies and where appropriate designated open space, environmental protection or other designation that would restrict future development. The opportunity to acquire some of these lands may occur from time to time; CLOCA staff will review and consider these opportunities when they arise.

Agreements

CLOCA can enter into agreements/leases for the use of Authority owned lands. The Authority will determine the most appropriate agreement or lease arrangement for a specific property where applicable. This can extend to providing a Life Interest to a vendor/donor, entering into

agreements for co-managing a property, offering agricultural leases on lands prior to restoration/rehabilitation, and leases or agreements for the construction/maintenance and management of public trails.

Conservation Easements and Covenants

Conservation easements are not used by CLOCA and will not be used in the future. This is due to the additional administrative and inspection requirements that must occur on an annual basis. Also, there are a number of land trust organizations that exist which are prepared to accept new easements and take on the associated administrative responsibilities of these easements. For the urban valleylands, municipalities are better geared to holding conservation easements, particularly where significant restoration works may be required in the future. CLOCA will not consider holding covenants in the future for the same reasons as conservation easements.

Covenants

Traditionally, covenants have been used to restrict an owner from undertaking specific activities on all or a portion of their property. Typically, these covenants would not permit the alteration or destruction of a resource, placing fill, or the building of structures. Amendments to the Conservation Lands Act in 1994 permit a landowner to grant or sell a positive covenant to 'conservation bodies' (such as the Crown, conservation authorities, municipal councils, bands or registered charities) for the protection and conservation of land.

APPENDIX 2 – PROPERTY EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Property Assessment

When a candidate property has been brought to CLOCA's attention, staff will undertake a desk top analysis to determine that if it meets the parameters for acquisition. Where possible, a field investigation will be conducted. While a desk-top analysis can highlight general features of significance, a field investigation can help to confirm the actual quality of the ecological features on the property and provide a better sense of how the property contributes to the larger land acquisition target area. Together, a desk-top analysis combined with a field investigation can generally determine whether or not CLOCA will continue to pursue the acquisition. Depending on the property history and preliminary site evaluation, additional environmental studies may also be recommended (i.e., Phase 1 Environmental Assessment).

Properties that meet the criteria for acquisition outlined in section 4 will then be pursued for acquisition upon review and recommendation by the CAO and approval of the Board. This will involve identifying the funding source or program to secure the property. Once funding is confirmed and/or funding applications submitted, and an acquisition approach identified (purchase, or donation), CLOCA staff will proceed to negotiate with the landowner(s) to secure the property (this may include obtaining a property appraisal, negotiating agreements, commissioning a survey, undertaking an environmental review, and transferring the title of the property).

When assessing the suitability of land for acquisition, consideration will primarily be given to the existing natural heritage features and land use that occur on the property. Restoration potential will be considered for portions of the property not currently in existing natural cover. Structures (houses, barns, outbuildings) will then be considered, and the feasibility of severances determined. Finally, annual property taxes, potential improvements or site remediation requirements and long-term maintenance requirements for the property will be reviewed. Where it is desirable to have a municipality help manage a property, arrangements would be made in advance with the respective municipality to have an agreement in principle for long term management

Property Appraisal Procedures

Property Appraisals are required in any land donation that is to be certified as an ecological gift through Environment Canada's Ecological Gift Program. While CLOCA has not had any issues with donations to date, other agencies have had negative experiences with some landowner initiated donations. In these situations, the landowners ultimately decided not to proceed with the donation, leaving the entire cost of the appraisal in the hands of the agency who originally agreed to cover the costs as part of the donation.

Learning from these other agencies, it is recommended that the appraisal costs for land donations be covered entirely by the donor(s) or shared by the donor(s) and CLOCA. If the donation proceeds and the ownership is transferred to CLOCA, the landowner will be reimbursed for their portion of the costs of the appraisal. In the event that the donation does not proceed due to a change of heart by the landowner, there is no reimbursement for the appraisal. The appraisal

report must meet the requirements for appraisals set out by Environment Canada, if it is to be certified through the Ecological Gift Program. CLOCA will provide the landowner with a list of acceptable appraisers. If the landowner requests to use an appraiser that CLOCA does not endorse, the landowner will be responsible for the full costs of the appraisal and will be reimbursed only if the donation is completed. CLOCA has the discretion to waive this requirement in special circumstances.

APPENDIX 3 – ENVIRONMENT CANADA – ECOLOGICAL GIFTS PROGRAM

The Ecological Gifts Program enables owners of property with sensitive natural features to preserve wildlife habitat. Ecological Gifts are qualified charitable land donations that generate enhanced income tax benefits. Donations of fee simple title and partial interests, including conservation easements, are eligible. In many scenarios the landowner can continue to hold title and/or live on the land.

In Ontario, to qualify as Ecologically Sensitive, land must satisfy at least one criterion from an 'A' List of Specific Categories of Qualified Lands and one or more from a 'B' List of General Criteria for Other Ecologically Sensitive Lands (see below).

Gift recipients include land trusts and other conservation charities, and government agencies chosen by donors and approved by the federal government. Donors of ecogifts receive a donation receipt for the fair market value of the gift.

Ecological gifts (ecogifts) receive tax treatment that is superior to most other charitable gifts. Ecogift tax advantages include:

- eliminated taxable capital gain on the disposition of the property
- no income limit for calculating the tax credit/deduction
- donation value certified by the Government of Canada
- tax liability for donors that do not protect the gifted land

The process of making an ecological gift is relatively straightforward. The donor will basically have two steps to complete that include providing: (i) information to support the evaluation of the land as ecologically sensitive, and (ii) an appraisal of Fair Market Value by a qualified appraiser along with a signed Application for Appraisal Review and Determination. The donor and recipient will generally cooperate on the application to confirm that the property is qualified as ecologically sensitive. The recipient will also often help the donor arrange for the appraisal of fair market value.

For more information you can visit the Ecological Gift website at:

<http://www.on.ec.gc.ca/wildlife/ecogifts/ecogifts-e.html>

Provincial Ecosensitivity Criteria – Ontario

A) Specific Categories of Qualified Lands

Lands, easements or covenants relative to such lands, which fall into one or more of the following categories shall be deemed to be ecologically sensitive lands in Ontario. This is provided terms of easements or covenants regard and protect the ecologically sensitive features of the land.

- A1. Significant portions of the habitat of federally or provincially listed species at risk, including endangered or threatened species, or species of special concern;
- A2. Areas designated as Provincially Significant Wetlands;
- A3. Provincial or regional Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest;
- A4. Designated Areas of Concern for biodiversity purposes as identified in Forest Management Plans;
- A5. Lands that are registered under the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program;
- A6. *Areas that are registered under the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program that are managed for wildlife habitat conservation purposes under an approved Managed Forest Plan;*
- A7. Areas promoting the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity that are identified within a regional or watershed plan or strategy developed by a recognized conservation organization;
- A8. Areas designated as a World Heritage Site for biodiversity conservation purposes, a core area of a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, or a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention;
- A9. Areas of biodiversity significance identified in a Canadian Heritage Rivers Management Plan or Strategy;
- A10. Areas designated in the Niagara Escarpment Plan as an Escarpment Protection Area or an Escarpment Natural Area;
- A11. Areas designated as Natural Core, Natural Linkage, Sensitive Hydrological Feature, High Aquifer Vulnerability, Significant Landform, Minimum Areas of Influence or Minimum Vegetation Protection Zones within the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan;
- A12. Areas designated Core Area, Corridor or Restoration Area in the Lake Ontario Greenway Strategy. **Criterion Deleted from the Ecological Gifts Program 2009.**
- A13. Areas designated for biodiversity conservation purposes within Management Plans or Strategies for the Trent-Severn or Rideau Waterways;
- A14. Areas within a municipal official plan or zoning by-law under the *Planning Act* (Ontario) designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area, Environmentally Significant Area, Environmental Protection Area, Restoration Area, Natural Heritage System or other designation for similar purposes that are compatible with the conservation of the biodiversity, ecological features and functions of the site;
- A15. Areas within or adjacent to a Provincial Park, Provincial Park Reserve, Conservation

Reserve, Conservation Area, Wilderness Area, Provincial Wildlife Area, National Wildlife Area, Migratory Bird Sanctuary, National Park, National Park Reserve or Ecological or Nature Reserve managed by a government or non-government agency;

- A 16. Municipal Parks or other protected areas designated or managed for biodiversity conservation purposes. Criterion Deleted from the Ecological Gifts Program 2009.
- A17. Areas identified as Carolinian Canada sites or Carolinian core natural areas and corridors as designated by the Big Picture, natural area mapping program;
- A18. Areas designated as Core Natural Area, Natural Area Buffer, Natural Area Link, or Valued Ecosystem Component in the National Capital Greenbelt Master Plan by the National Capital Commission; and
- A19. Areas designated for biodiversity purposes by regional agencies such as the Niagara Parks Commission, St. Clair Parkway Commission, St. Lawrence Parks Commission and the Waterfront Regeneration Trust.

B. General Criteria for Other Ecologically Sensitive Lands

Lands, easements or covenants relative to such lands, that meet one or more of the following general criteria may also be considered to be ecologically sensitive lands in Ontario — subject to the approval of the federal Minister of the Environment or a person delegated by the Minister for this purpose (the term "significant" for the purposes below refers to definitions provided in Provincial Policy Statements): This is provided terms of easements or covenants regard and protect the ecologically sensitive features of the land.

- B1. Significant habitats such as alvars, prairies, cliffs, Great Lakes coastal habitats, old growth forest areas, glacial relic communities and sites with enduring geological features that contribute to biodiversity;
- B2. Areas of wildlife concentration such as bat caves, snake hibernacula, heronries, deer wintering yards and sites used by migratory water birds and other species for seasonal staging, feeding, breeding and like purposes;
- B3. Areas identified, designated or protected as ecologically significant or ecologically important by a government or non-government local, provincial, national or international system or body;
- B4. Significant water bodies, rivers, streams, shorelines, valleys, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, headwaters and aquifers;
- B5. Significant wildlife or fish habitats;
- B6. Significant woodlands;

- B7. Areas that have significant current or potential for enhanced ecological values through restoration, remediation, management or geographic proximity to other ecologically significant properties;
- B8. Natural buffers and adjacent lands around areas identified under other ecologically sensitive lands categories or criteria that contribute to the conservation of biodiversity;
- B9. Natural links or corridors between areas identified under other ecologically sensitive lands categories or criteria that contribute to the conservation of biodiversity;
- B10. Areas used for long-term scientific study or baseline and benchmark monitoring of biodiversity; and
- B11. Areas that contribute to Canada's environmental heritage through the maintenance of the genetic diversity of species, ecosystem health, or landscape biodiversity, and other natural spaces of significance to the environment in which they are located.

The categories and criteria listed above, for the purposes of implementation of provisions in the *Income Tax Act* for ecological gifts, have been agreed to by representatives of the Governments of Ontario and Canada. This list and criteria may be further elaborated and amended by agreement between Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

APPENDIX 4 – DISPOSITION OF SURPLUS LANDS

Disposal of surplus lands may be considered by the Authority. Surplus lands may be sold (fee simple) or ownership transferred in exchange for lands within identified Land Acquisition Target Areas consistent with this Strategy. Revenues realized through the disposition of surplus lands shall be directed to future land acquisition consistent with this Strategy, or may be used in the management of Conservation Areas. In the disposal of lands, the Authority shall ensure that any conditions/restrictions placed on future disposition of the lands identified in the original acquisition of said lands, shall be respected.

APPENDIX 5 – LANDOWNER CONTACT

The initial steps associated with landowner contact include developing a landowner contact list for a specific area within one of the Land Securement Target Areas, preparing landowner information packages and individual property mapping for properties of interest to CLOCA. These activities will be undertaken by the Land Securement Officer. A landowner contact program can include some or all of the following activities:

Mailing

This involves sending out a letter to a specific landowner outlining how their property fits into one of the land acquisition target areas outlined in this acquisition strategy. The letter will also include a photo mosaic map of the subject property, appropriate CLOCA program information, and any relevant information pertaining to land acquisition by a public agency.

Telephone Solicitation

This involves calling target landowners to introduce them to CLOCA's program and CLOCA's interest in securing all or a portion of a subject property, to explain the Land Acquisition Strategy and to identify other program information that may be interested. Ideally, this contact approach would result in a meeting with staff and the landowner to discuss the program, their land holdings and landowner options. Telephone solicitation is most effective as follow-up to landowner mailing. If the landowner is not interested in any long-term securement options, then CLOCA staff can take the opportunity to discuss the various CLOCA stewardship programs that may be of interest to them and arrange follow-up discussions if desired.

Drop-Ins

On occasion staff may visit target areas and drop in on properties for sale or properties that are ecologically significant in order to engage the landowner in the acquisition or stewardship program. This is a necessary action for landowners who are unreachable via the telephone or who have unlisted contact information.

Scheduled Visits

If a landowner initiates interest in land acquisition with CLOCA staff, or a landowner has been contacted and they have expressed some interest in the program, a site visit or landowner visit can be scheduled. This may not include a site walk of the property but could involve a detailed discussion around CLOCA's land acquisition program and procedures. At this time, more information can be provided to the landowner about the potential options available to them. It is always stressed to the landowner that they need to seek personal legal and financial advice before making any decisions related to the sale or donation of all or a portion of their property.

Landowner Leads

This involves taking leads provided by landowners, various conservation organizations and municipalities. These will be followed up after discussion with the hand off individual or agency on the appropriate follow-up steps as outlined

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