

The Bruce Trail Conservancy



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Close to home.

Cheltenham Badlands

Management Planning Terms of Reference

Final Draft for Public Review
April 3, 2008

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1. Introduction

The Cheltenham Badlands are located on the Niagara Escarpment northwest of Brampton, near the villages of Inglewood and Cheltenham. The Badlands are a popular tourist destination due to the unique topography of the area, and its relative proximity to major urban areas. In 2000 the 36.6-hectare property containing the Badlands was purchased for inclusion in the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces System (NEPOSS) with Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) funding. The Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) holds title and the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) manages the lands. Acquisition of the property ensured public ownership of this Provincially Significant Earth Science ANSI (Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) and secured 1.4 km of the Bruce Trail optimum route.

Under the Niagara Escarpment Plan, a management plan must be developed for the site, which will give guidance to the landowner, land managers and planners on how the site should be used. Over the course of the management planning process a series of documents are produced, which include the Terms of Reference, Background Information, Preliminary Management Plan and Final Management Plan.

This document comprises the Terms of Reference for the Management Planning Process. The Terms of Reference will explain the rationale for initiating a management plan for the Badlands, outline the proposed planning program, ensure that the plan will be in alignment with Niagara Escarpment Plan policies, and identify and assign tasks.

2. Reasons for Undertaking the Plan and Significant Issues

2.1 Background to the Cheltenham Badlands

The Cheltenham Badlands Property is located approximately 2 km west of Highway 10 on Olde Base Line Road, near the villages of Inglewood and Cheltenham (Figure 1). Major transportation routes in the area include Highway 10. Peel Regional Road 12 (Olde Base Line Road) forms the northern boundary of the property (Figure 2).

The Cheltenham Badlands Property is located on Ontario's Niagara Escarpment, which was designated a UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) World Biosphere Reserve in 1990. The property has one of the best examples of "badlands topography" development in southern Ontario, and has been designated an Earth Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) by the MNR. Badlands topography is rare in Ontario because in most areas the shale is protected from erosion by overlying hard rock (limestone, dolostone or sandstone), sand or gravel. In this area, the unprotected shale has eroded into a series of striking ridges and gullies, which has resulted in a popular tourist draw (Figure 3).

The Badlands also lie within the Inglewood Slope Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), which is an important groundwater discharge area. The coldwater stream on the property at the foot of the exposed badlands ridges is a tributary of the Credit River.

Figure 1 Regional Map of Cheltenham Badlands Area

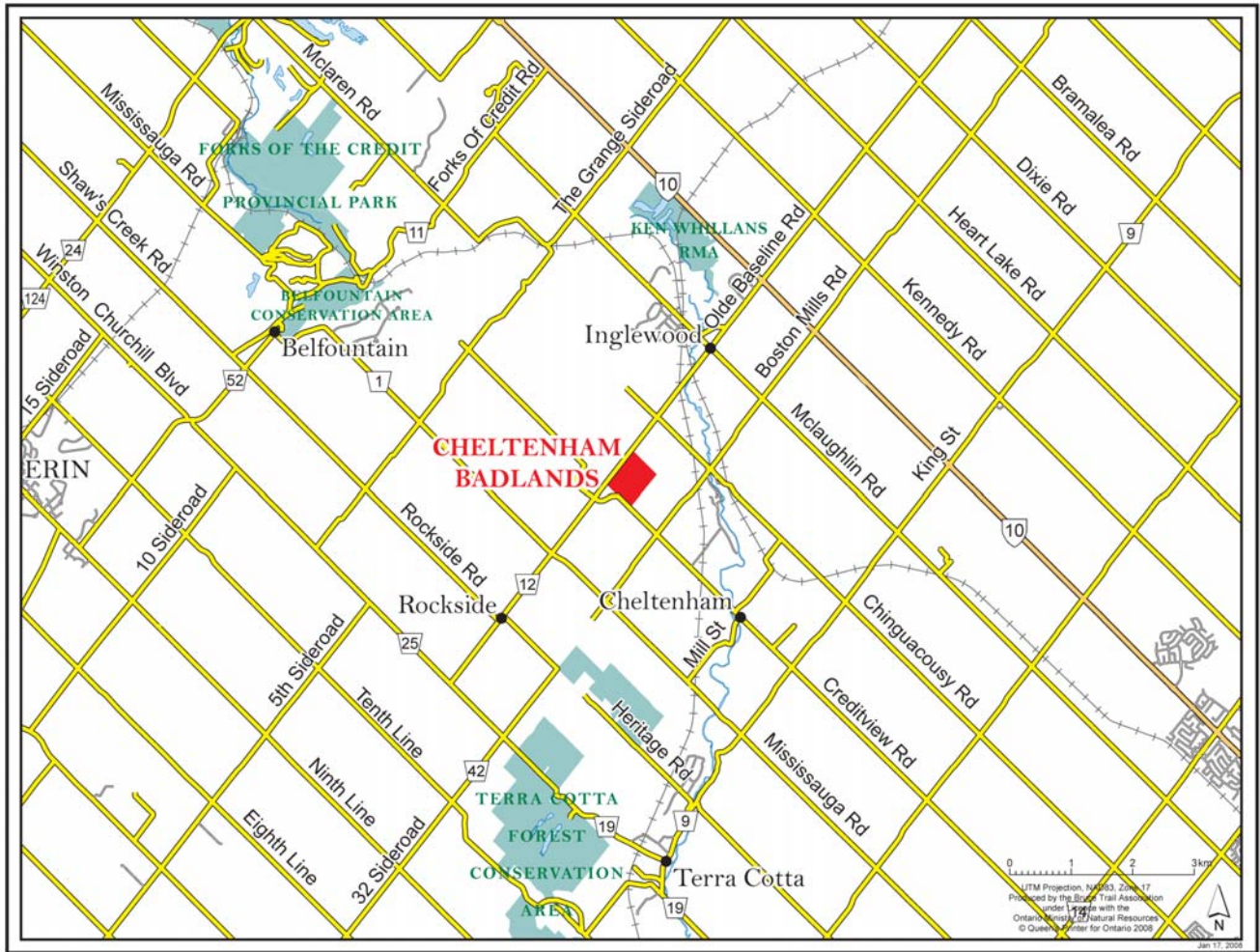


Figure 2 Cheltenham Badlands Property Site Map

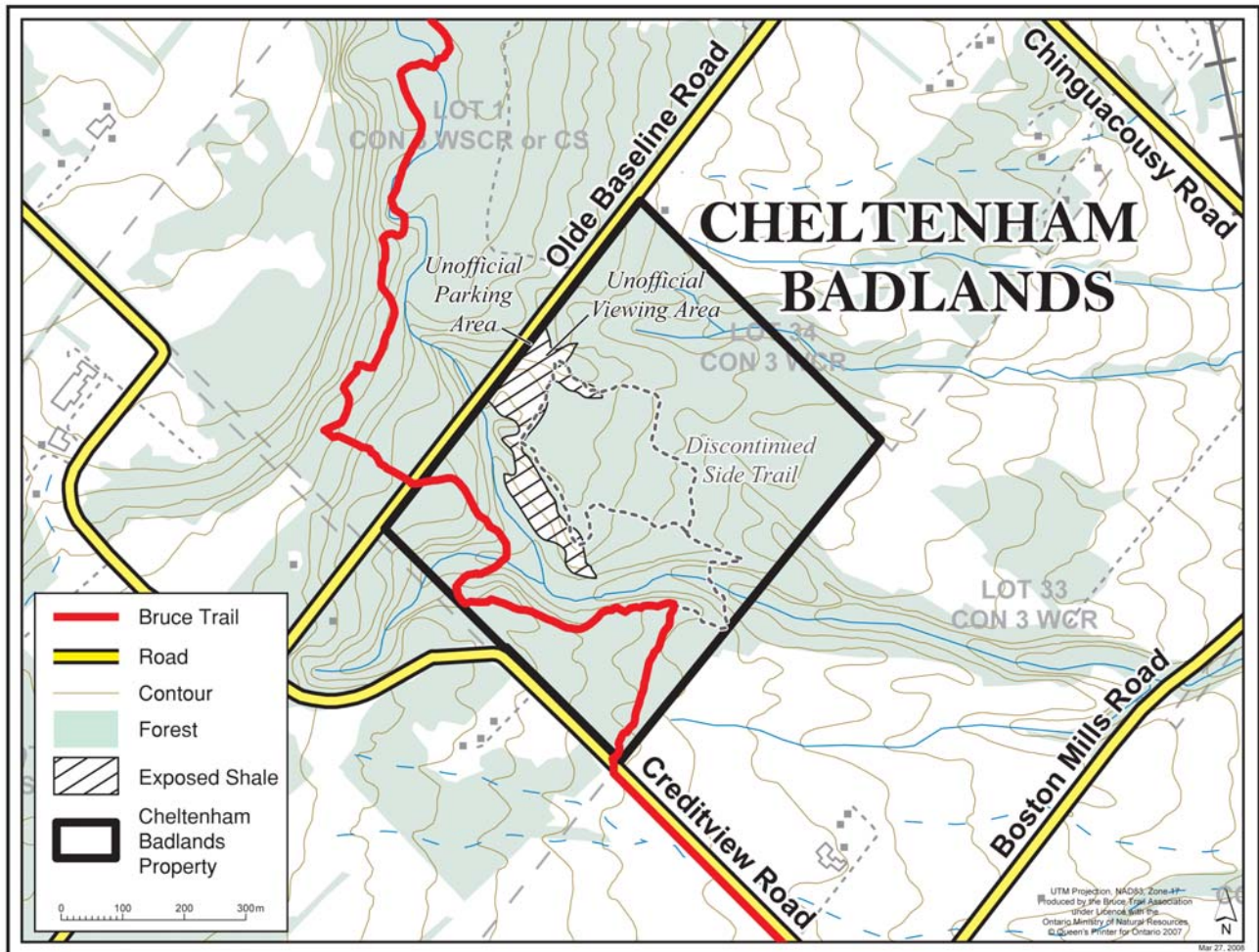


Figure 3 **Shale Slopes of the Cheltenham Badlands**



2.2 Management Activities To Date

The Badlands are situated within the 36.6 hectare Cooper Property (referred to in this document as the “Cheltenham Badlands Property”), purchased in 2000 by the Province of Ontario (Her Majesty the Queen, in Right of Ontario, as represented by the Chair of Management Board of Cabinet) for the purposes of securing the optimum route of the Bruce Trail, under the MNR’s *Natural Areas Protection Program* (NAPP). The Ontario Heritage Trust (OHT) holds title to the property, and the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) has management responsibilities for the site under an agreement with the OHT.

A 1.4 km stretch of the main Bruce Trail crosses the property at its southwest end (Figure 2). The Bruce Trail has been on the property since 1989, when permission for passage was received from the previous landowner. Until recently a side trail allowed access from the main trail up to an unofficial Badlands viewing area by the road. This trail was closed in 2007 due to concerns over erosion of the treadway and maintenance issues (see significant issues below).

Stewardship of the Badlands property is carried out by volunteers (the Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club and the Caledon Countryside Alliance) with assistance and guidance from the BTC Land Stewardship Committee and BTC staff (Land Stewardship Coordinator and Executive Director).

2.3 Significant Issues

The bedrock at the Badlands is Queenston Shale, the base rock of the Niagara Escarpment. As a result of removal of vegetation during land clearing and livestock grazing in the early 1900s, the shale has eroded into a series of hummocks and gullies. The unique topography is a strong draw for tourists, school groups at all levels, and the media arts community (for example, the site is popular for photographers and film shoots). Figure 4 is an aerial photograph of a portion of the site, showing the unusual topography and the informal parking area for site visits on Olde Base Line Road. Most “Day Trip” tourists will visit only for fairly short lengths of time, however anecdotal observations are that on some weekends hundreds of people visit the site.

Management challenges for the Badlands appear to be related primarily to high public use of the site and include:

- Concerns over safety along the road adjacent to the site, due to number of visitors and their cars
- Garbage and littering
- Vandalism of signage and trail structures
- Creation of trespass or “rogue” trails
- Impact from pedestrian, equestrian and wheeled traffic on the slopes, trails and in other areas of the site

Figure 4 **Aerial Photograph of the Cheltenham Badlands (looking south)**



Photo courtesy of Jan Hannah

2.4 Niagara Escarpment Plan Requirements

The 2005 Niagara Escarpment Plan designates the Badlands property an “Escarpment Access” park under the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces System (NEPOSS):

“These areas will complement the larger, and in some cases, more developed parks or open space areas, by providing opportunities for public access to the Niagara Escarpment at appropriate points along the Escarpment. These areas will normally be small and may provide modest facilities to support day use activities at view points, rest areas, trailheads, picnic sites, scenic areas, fishing areas, beaches or other points of interest.” (Niagara Escarpment Plan, June 2005, Page 84)

Per the Niagara Escarpment Plan, a Management Plan must be developed for the site. The BTC prepared a Stewardship Plan for the site at the time of purchase, and while there is considerable background biophysical information in the plan, it does not contain all the requirements of the Management Plan.

The management planning process will define the goal, objectives and long term direction for the protection, development, management and use of the site’s resources. In particular, management issues such as access to the site and protection of the site’s sensitive earth and life science features, will be addressed in the planning process.

3. Planning Area

The primary planning area will include the entirety of the 36.6 hectare Cooper property, which comprises the Badlands as well as wooded areas in the vicinity of the Badlands and the cold water stream to the west of the Badlands. Lands adjacent to and in the vicinity of the property may also become part of the planning area if, over the course of planning activities, they are found to offer solutions to the issues identified.

4. Planning Team

The planning team will consist of:

- Beth Kümmling, Executive Director, Bruce Trail Conservancy (Project Lead)
- Alison Watt, Land Stewardship Coordinator, Bruce Trail Conservancy
- Janice McClelland, President, Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club
- Dave Moule, Land Stewardship Director, Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club
- Peter Leeney, Caledon Hills Club Appointee to BTC Board of Directors
- Paula Terpstra, Natural Heritage Coordinator, Ontario Heritage Trust
- Jan Hannah, BTC Land Steward (Badlands Property), Caledon Countryside Alliance
- Neil Morris, Chair, Caledon Environmental Advisory Committee
- Sean Ballaro, Supervisor of Traffic Operations, Region of Peel
- Richard Paterak, Town of Caledon Councillor, NEC Commissioner

Ex Officio Members will be:

- Eric Baldin, Conservation Lands Planner, Credit Valley Conservation
- Allan Thompson, Town of Caledon Councillor and CVC Board Member

The following will also be circulated on meeting material:

- Todd Salter, Town of Caledon
- Brian Baird, Town of Caledon
- Jim Carrick, Region of Peel

Approval agency advisors to the project will be:

- Susan Cooper, Ministry of Natural Resources
- Neil Hester, Niagara Escarpment Commission

Consulting expertise may be retained on an as-needed basis if issues beyond the resource capabilities of the planning team are identified.

5. Management Plan Approach

5.1 Stage 1 – Terms of Reference and Background Information

The first stage of the Management Planning process following preparation of this Terms of Reference is a Background Information document. The Background Information document will contain all data available to date regarding the site, including history of the site, its acquisition, physical conditions, existing uses, etc. Both the Terms of Reference and the Background Information will be made available for public review and comment prior to submission of each of the documents to the MNR and the OHT for approval. The Background Information document will be updated as new information becomes available.

5.2 Stage 2 – Interim Management Statements

Stage 2 involves the management planning for the site. Significant problems already evident on the site dictate that “immediate” action is required for key issues. Rather than work on a single, all-encompassing management plan which would not be approved for at least 2 years, a phased approach will be taken so that decisions relating to the more urgent issues at the site can be made as quickly as possible. Issues will be addressed in the following phases:

- Phase 1 – public health and safety (traffic issues)
- Phase 2 – public access to the site (including location and number of trails, site management options, commercial use, etc.)
- Phase 3 – public education (Public messaging for site, interpretive material, public outreach to the community/schools)

For each phase in Stage 2 an “Interim Management Statement” will be prepared to review and make recommendations on issues. The following paragraphs give a general overview of the work to be accomplished during each phase. As work progresses, new issues may be identified for discussion and resolution.

Phase 1 – Public Health and Safety

The enormous number of visitors to the site, particularly on weekends and holidays, has created an obvious safety hazard with respect to roadside parking, pedestrian crossing of the road, and ultimately the presence of so many vehicles in a small area at a single time. While this does not have a direct impact on the site itself, the potential for an injury due to the traffic issues warrant immediate attention.

A Badlands *Traffic Issues Working Group* has been struck to review the health and safety issues relating to vehicular traffic at the site, and to propose measures to mitigate any concerns identified. This Working Group is comprised of: Sean Ballaro (Working Group Lead), Jan Hannah, Richard Paterak, Paula Terpstra, Dave Moule, Allan Thompson and Alison Watt. The Working Group will also address the financial implications of recommendations made.

In addition to issues identified by the Working Group, issues identified during the initial public meeting (currently scheduled for April 2008) will be addressed. A draft *Interim Management Statement – Public Health and Safety* will be prepared, which will be made available for public review and input before finalization and approval by the MNR and the OHT. Once this plan has received approval, recommendations can be acted on.

Phase 2 – Public Access

The increasing level of attraction to the site shown by the public is a significant management challenge at the Badlands. The large number of people visiting the site, in addition to the traffic problems to be addressed in Phase 1, has resulted in littering, vandalism of structures and the creation of trespass or “rogue” trails, and improper use of designated trails by bikes and horses. Human impact on the Badland’s clay slopes may also be detrimental to the site.

This phase of the management planning process will develop a plan to outline how the site will be accessed by the public, the degree to which their access will be controlled, location of trails, and options to control site misuse. An evaluation will be conducted on the physical impact from pedestrian, equestrian and wheeled traffic on the slopes, trails and in other areas of the site. This will involve a literature review of material relating to the site and similar sites, anecdotal evidence provided by the local community, and the gathering of empirical data through a monitoring program. The monitoring program may provide data to feed into the management plan in the short term, but it is anticipated that monitoring will continue after the draft management plan is developed so that long-term data can be acquired.

During Phase 2, the Management Planning Team will also address the implications of the site’s designation as an Access Park under NEPOSS, and whether that designation is the most appropriate given the current uses and misuses of the site, and the findings of the literature review and monitoring program. The Team will also define the significant management responsibilities associated with the site and identify possible partnership or management sharing arrangements that will benefit conservation of the site overall.

A draft *Interim Management Statement – Public Access* will be prepared, which will be made available for public review and input before finalization and approval by the MNR and the OHT. Once this plan has received approval, recommendations can be acted on.

Phase 3 – Public Education

In addition to its attraction as a tourist destination the Badlands are a draw for schools and universities as an educational tool, as well as to the media arts community as a backdrop for film shoots, photography sessions and other commercial uses. The degree to which these activities will be permitted at the site (based on large part on the findings of Phases 1 and 2) will be assessed during Phase 3 of the process. The Management Planning Team will also address how the site will be profiled to the public and in the media, what print and web material should be created to better educate the public on the Badlands, and the kinds of new or additional interpretive and trail signage that should be placed at the site. Other management planning needs may be identified during Phases 1 and 2 that can be addressed during Phase 3.

A draft *Interim Management Statement – Public Education* will be prepared, which will be made available for public review and input before finalization and approval by the MNR and the OHT. Once this plan has received approval, recommendations can be acted on.

5.3 Stage 3 – Park Management Plan

The final stage is to compile the Interim Management Statements and any other management planning findings and recommendations into the final Park Management Plan for the site. Recommendations made in the Interim statements can be altered or finalized as the management plan is finalized. At the initiation of this Stage a public meeting will be held to present the findings in the Interim Management Statements and seek input on recommendations and outstanding or as yet unidentified issues and concerns. Public input will be incorporated into the final document.

In addition to compiling the findings and recommendations of the Interim Management Statements and any other management plan findings, the final plan will contain a summary of:

- Information made available for public review;
- Date and place of public meeting(s);
- Summary of major issues and concerns; and
- How the BTC has addressed or will address the public concerns.

The Park Management Plan will be made available for public review, before being finalized and submitted to the MNR and the OHT for final approval.

6. Public Consultation And Communication Strategies

During the term of the planning process, the public and various interest groups will be provided with:

- An invitation to participate in a public meeting to provide input on issues and concerns to be addressed during the management planning process

- A 30-day period to review and comment on the Terms of Reference, Background Information document, Interim Management Statements and the final Park Management Plan
- A public meeting following completion of the Interim Management Statements when the final Park Management Plan begins development

If additional planning stages are necessary, additional public consultation opportunities will be provided to address them.

The public will be notified of all public meetings and document review opportunities in the following ways:

- Mailings inviting participation to adjacent landowners, agencies, interest groups, and local politicians (municipal, provincial and federal)
- Posting of on-site notices
- Paid advertisement in local and regional newspapers
- Posting on the Bruce Trail Conservancy and Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club web pages

All notices will indicate where the documents can be accessed, outline the planning process, identify the opportunities for public input and solicit public comments. In addition, each document will be published in sufficient numbers to be circulated to adjacent landowners, agencies, municipalities, interest groups, and politicians. The document will be accompanied by a letter describing the opportunities for participation (e.g., submission of briefs, meeting with planning team). The documents will also be made available for public review on the BTC and Caledon Hills Club web pages, and in hard copy at the Town of Caledon offices.

7. Background Documents and Planning Document Integration

Integration of the various resource management and stewardship interests will be addressed at appropriate stages during the planning process.

7.1 Document Resources

The following documents or materials, among others, will guide and support the planning project. The list is not comprehensive and other materials may be consulted as identified.

Anderson, D., L. Dupuis, and H. Duthie, 1995. *An Environmental Inventory of the Bruce Trail*, The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

Baker, J., 2000. *Environmental Site Assessment - Cooper Property*. The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

The Bruce Trail Association, 1991. *Bruce Trail Comprehensive Plan*, The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

The Bruce Trail Association, 2002, *Cooper Property, Bruce Trail Property Number 54-008, Land Stewardship Plan*, The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

The Bruce Trail Association, 2006. *Trail Reference Guide*, 24th Edition. The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

BTC Files (Property Acquisition folder, user surveys, other correspondence)

Halton Region Conservation Authority, 1998. *Flood Plain & Headwater Area Regulations*, Halton Conservation Authority, Milton, Ontario.

Knuston, F. and R.W. Hendren. 1999. *Limited Appraisal in a Summary Report of Russell Cooper Estate - W1/2 Part Lot 34, Concession 3, WHS, former Chinguacousy Township, Caledon, Ontario*. Hendren Mitchell Real Estate Appraisals Ltd.

Niagara Escarpment Commission, 2005. *The Niagara Escarpment Plan*, Ministry of Natural Resources, Toronto, Ontario

Niagara Escarpment Commission, 1996. *Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces System Manual*, Ministry of Natural Resources, Georgetown, Ontario.

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 1975. *Earth Science Candidate Nature Reserves in the Niagara Escarpment Planning Area*, Ministry of Natural Resources, Division of Parks System Planning Branch.

Riley, J. & J. Jalava, and S. Varga, 1996. *Ecological Survey of the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve*, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Southcentral Region.

Tovell, Dr. W.M., 1992. *Guide to the Geology of the Niagara Escarpment*, Niagara Escarpment Commission, Ashton-Potter Limited, Concord, Ontario.

Walker, C., R. Wood, D. Harvey, D. Pugsley, 1997. *Bruce Trail Association 1997 Trail Audit*, The Bruce Trail Association, Hamilton, Ontario.

7.2 Internal Integration

- The Draft Terms of Reference, Phase 1, 2 and 3 Interim Management Statements, and the Park Management Plan will be circulated for review within the BTC (Land Stewardship Chair and Staff, Caledon Hills Bruce Trail Club), the Ontario Heritage Trust, the Caledon Countryside Alliance, the Region of Peel and the Town of Caledon, prior to release to the public for review and comment;
- All draft documents will be circulated to the Policy and Planning Branch (Land Use and Environmental Planning Section) of the MNR, and the Niagara Escarpment Commission program staff to ensure compliance with all Niagara Escarpment Plan requirements.

7.3 External Integration

- A contact list will be prepared and updated as required to assist in distributing notices and/or documents at each stage of the planning process, and
- Notices will be mailed out, posted on site, inserted in local and regional newspapers and placed on the BTC and Caledon Hills Club web pages to encourage involvement in the planning process.

8. Planning Schedule Summary

Figure 5 provides a summary of the anticipated planning schedule for the project.

9. Staffing And Budget Requirements

In addition to preparing the park management plan and its various components, the planning team will be responsible for direct consultation with interest groups, municipalities, and the general public. Staff responsibilities will be as follows:

- Beth Kümmling, Executive Director, The Bruce Trail Conservancy, will chair the planning team and provide ongoing assistance to the project by conducting research and background information collection including public consultation, communications products (e.g., letters, paid ads, draft planning documents, etc.), consulting with the Niagara Escarpment staff and with MNR Niagara Escarpment program staff to ensure compliance with all *Niagara Escarpment Plan* requirements, and act as a liaison to local interest groups and the public.
- Alison Watt, Land Stewardship Coordinator, The Bruce Trail Conservancy, will provide ongoing technical assistance to the project by providing information about site physical conditions, current operations, management issues and community concerns.
- Sean Ballaro, Supervisor of Traffic Operations, Region of Peel, will lead the Workgroup addressing traffic issues as part of the Phase 1 – Interim Management Statement – Public Access. Sean will be direct liaison with the Region of Peel for the duration of the project.

Other planning team members and contacts may be requested to undertake various tasks throughout the project, and outside consulting expertise may be retained as necessary.

The following table provides a rough estimated of funds required to cover costs associated with the planning and consultation process.

Table 1 Estimated Management Planning Budget

Conference Calls and Meeting Facilities	\$1,500
Documentation Production/Copying	\$2,000
Mapping and Large-Scale Document Production/Copying	\$1,000
Public Meeting (facility and refreshments)	\$1,000
Miscellaneous (advertising, presentation material, supplies, mileage, etc.)	\$1,000
Consulting Expertise (requirements to be identified during planning process)	TBD
Total	\$6,500 plus consulting expertise

Figure 5 Cheltenham Badlands Management Planning Schedule

Planning Stage	Planning Task	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Jul-08	Aug-08	Sep-08	Oct-08	Nov-08	Dec-08	Jan-09	Feb-09	Mar-09	Apr-09	May-09	Jun-09	Jul-09	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10		
Stage 1	Terms of Reference																													
	Preparation	■	■																											
	Internal Review/Revisions			■	■																									
	Public Review and Comment					■	■																							
	Finalized for Submission to MNR, OHT and Municipalities							■	■																					
	MNR, OHT and Municipal Review, Recommendations and Approval									■	■																			
	Background Information																													
	Preparation	■	■	■	■																									
	Internal Review/Revisions					■	■																							
	Public Review and Comment							■	■																					
Finalized for Submission to MNR, OHT and Municipalities									■	■																				
MNR, OHT and Municipal Review, Recommendations and Approval											■	■																		
Stage 2	Phase 1 - Interim Management Statement - Public Health and Safety																													
	Public Meeting/Open House				■																									
	Data Gathering/Planning			■	■	■	■	■	■																					
	Draft IMS Preparation								■	■																				
	Internal Review/Revisions										■	■																		
	Public Review and Comment												■	■																
	Finalized for Submission to MNR, OHT and Municipalities														■	■														
	MNR, OHT and Municipal Review, Recommendations and Approval															■	■													
	Phase 2 - Interim Management Statement - Public Access																													
	Data Gathering/Planning																													
	Draft IMS Preparation											■	■																	
	Internal Review/Revisions												■	■																
	Public Review and Comment														■	■														
	Finalized for Submission to MNR, OHT and Municipalities															■	■													
	MNR, OHT and Municipal Review, Recommendations and Approval																■	■												
Stage 3	Park Management Plan																													
	Public Meeting/Open House																					■								
	Revision to Final Plan																				■	■								
	Internal Review/Revisions																						■	■						
	Public Review and Comment																							■	■					
	Finalized for Submission to MNR, OHT and Municipalities																											■	■	
MNR, OHT and Municipal Approval																											■	■		