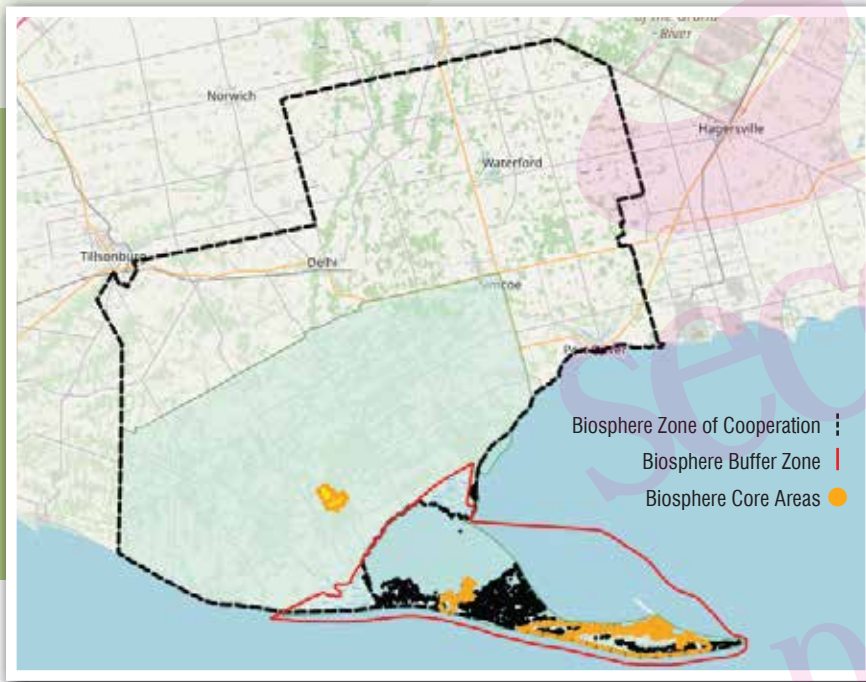




Long Point Walsingham Forest Priority Place

A significant portion of the Long Point Biosphere Reserve has been chosen as a “Priority Place” for conservation by the federal government. It’s one of 11 Priority Places identified in Canada and the only one so far identified in Ontario.

The Long Point Walsingham Forest (LPWF) Priority Place was selected by Environment and Climate Change Canada in partnership with the Province of Ontario because of its high biodiversity, large number of species at risk, highly-engaged local conservation community and significant environmental threats. The Priority Place initiative is implementing the Pan-Canadian Approach to Species at Risk Conservation through an agreement between Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments across Canada to conserve species and their habitat.



The LPWF Priority Place includes the Biosphere Reserve’s core areas on Long Point and Backus Woods; its buffer zone, which includes the Big Creek National Wildlife Area and Turkey Point marshes; and its zone of cooperation in the south-western portion of Norfolk County.

The Long Point peninsula is the longest freshwater sand spit in the world, has the largest variety of plants and animals in Canada, and is a world-famous spot for migrating birds and rare Carolinian forests. All this led to the designation of the Long Point area as a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1986.

The area is also home to 65,000 people and the beautiful natural heritage is a key part of the local economy.

Members of the Long Point Walsingham Forest Collaborative include:

- ALUS Norfolk Inc.
- Bird Studies Canada
- Carolinian Canada Coalition
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Long Point Basin Land Trust
- Long Point Region Conservation Authority
- Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Natural Resource Solutions Inc.
- Norfolk County
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Ontario Nature
- Ontario Plant Restoration Alliance
- Ontario Road Ecology Group
- St. Williams Conservation Reserve
- Tallgrass Ontario

Introducing the Long Point Walsingham Forest Priority Place

Local conservation groups *working together* to **protect** the future of the **Long Point Biosphere Reserve**, one of Canada’s high biodiversity ecosystems.



This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Top Threats IDENTIFIED within the Long Point Walsingham Forest Priority Place

- The invasive species, *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed). This fast-growing, thick, tall grass has spread swiftly, forming dense thickets of vegetation where native flora and fauna can't survive.
- The loss of Tallgrass Prairie habitat, a rare ecosystem that requires regular burning to thrive. Tallgrass prairies are an important habitat for bees and nesting birds. They also make the soil richer, clean the water and air, keep riverbanks strong, and allow wildflowers to grow.
- Road Mortality is the main threat to many of the reptiles and amphibians found in LPWF, including the Blanding's Turtle.
- Rich farmlands surround the Long Point Biosphere Reserve where farmers grow food for their communities and beyond. Runoff pollution from the farms has created algae blooms in downstream coastal wetlands and Lake Erie. ALUS Norfolk Inc. is working with farmers to support natural soil and land use methods that help protect wildlife and the natural habitat.

Tall grass prairies, an integral part of the LPWF ecosystem, helps reduce soil erosion. Burning removes invasive species and keeps the prairies healthy.

Photo courtesy of Tallgrass Ontario ▼



Phragmites australis (common reed), an invasive European plant overtaking the Long Point coastal wetlands, is being eradicated through a pilot project managed by several local groups.

Photo courtesy of Giles Restoration Services ▲

Many species of turtles and snakes, some of them endangered, have been spared death by passing vehicles after fencing and tunnels were installed along the Long Point Causeway.

Photo courtesy of Long Point Biosphere Reserve ►



Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) in Norfolk County is helping local farmers develop land use methods and create wetlands to protect wildlife habitat and reduce soil erosion.

Photo courtesy of ALUS Canada ▼



LPWF Priority Place Action Plan and Collaborative

In the LPWF Priority Place, the federal and provincial governments are working with conservation partners and stakeholders to develop and implement a Conservation Action Plan. The vision for the LPWF Priority Place is to create healthy, resilient and connected ecosystems that support biodiversity, productive landscapes and a thriving community.

In order to effectively implement the Conservation Action plan, a Collaborative of many local conservation groups formed in 2019. This Collaborative will set priorities for improving biodiversity conservation, create new partnerships, seek funding and implement coordinated actions on-the-ground for species at risk and their habitat.