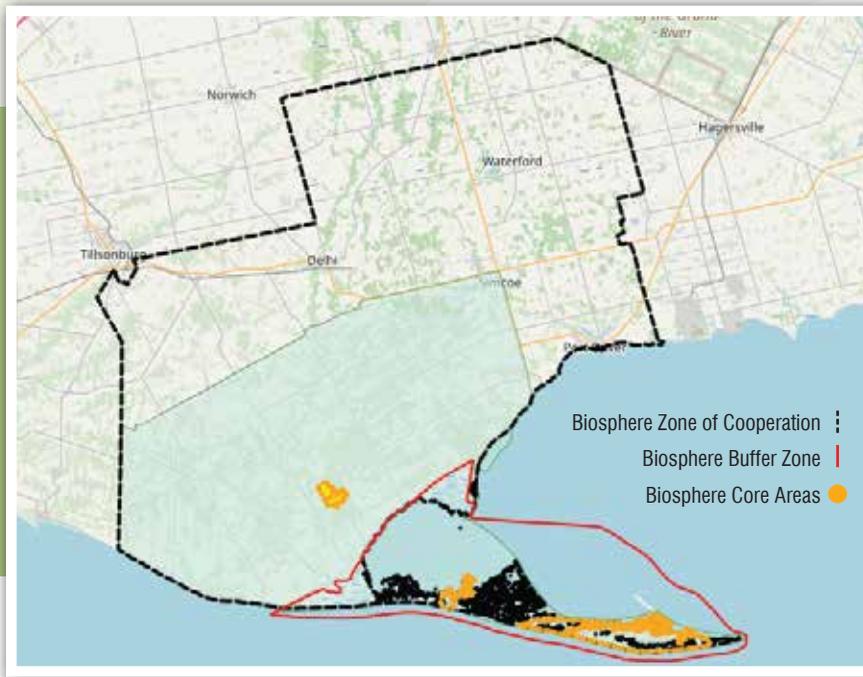


Long Point Walsingham Forest Priority Place

A significant portion of the Long Point Biosphere Region 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 Region’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 Region 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
- Birds Canada
- Carolinian Canada Coalition
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Long Point Basin Land Trust
- Long Point Region Conservation Authority
- Long Point Biosphere Region
- 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
- Ministry of Northern Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry
- Ontario Nature
- Ontario Plant Restoration Alliance
- Ontario Road Ecology Group
- St. Williams Conservation Reserve
- Tallgrass Ontario



Update Long Point Walsingham Forest Priority Place

longpointwalsinghamforest.ca

Local conservation groups *working together* to **protect** the future of the **Long Point Biosphere Region**, 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, tallgrass has spread swiftly, forming dense thickets of vegetation where native flora and fauna can't survive.
- Open Country habitats such as tallgrass prairie, savannah and oak woodland provide important homes for both common and rare plants and animals. These habitats were once abundant across the Carolinian Canada, but have now largely been lost. Some of the collaborative efforts underway in the LPWF Priority Place to restore and enhance Open Country habitat include prescribed fire to prevent woody species encroachment; direct seeding to create new habitat; invasive species management; and insect, bird and reptile surveys to try and measure the impacts of this work.
- Road mortality is a leading threat to biodiversity. Roads fragment the landscape and many species need to cross roads to access critical resources. You can help. Watch for wildlife and drive with care. Report your wildlife/road sightings to inform mitigation efforts: <https://naturalist.ca/projects/wildlife-on-roads-in-ontario>
- Rich farmlands surround the Long Point Biosphere Region where farmers grow food for their communities and beyond. Runoff from farms can contribute to harmful algae blooms in downstream coastal wetlands and Lake Erie. ALUS Norfolk works with farmers to support ecosystem restoration projects that can mitigate runoff and help protect natural habitat.
- Forests and treed swamps are important landscape ecosystems. Forests and forest cover are directly related to solving climate change issues while treed swamps are often undervalued but control very important land use problems such as seasonal flooding. The Forests and Treed Swamps team is working to conserve and protect forests and treed swamps through invasive species mitigation and habitat creation in the LPWF Priority Place.

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 ▲

When you are driving and see a wildlife crossing sign, please watch for wildlife and drive with caution. If safe, move animals off the road in the direction they are moving.

Photo courtesy of Ontario Road Ecology Group ►



ALUS Norfolk works with farmers to target marginal, unproductive, or environmentally sensitive areas of the farm to create habitat and provide ecosystem services including cleaner air and cleaner water.

Photo courtesy of ALUS Norfolk ▼



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.

