

**Greenway Ecological Standing Committee and Greenway Ecological Fund
Ecological Standing Committee and Habitat Enhancement and Recreation Fund
Meeting Agenda**

July 9, 2025, 9:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Duende at Silo City, 85 Silo City Row, Buffalo, NY 14203

or

WebEx Meeting

General Meeting

- 9:20 AM** **Arrival/WebEx Sign-in**
- 9:30 AM** **Opening Remarks and Introductions**
- 9:35 AM** **ESC Pre-proposal (15 minute presentation + 5 minutes questions)**
Tifft Nature Preserve Living Shoreline Enhancement, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- 10:00 AM** **GESC Proposals (15 minute presentation + 5 minutes discussion)**
Buffalo Water Buoy, SUNY Buffalo State
North Tonawanda Riparian Improvements, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- 10:30 AM** **GESC Status Presentations (15 minute presentations + 5 minutes QA/QC)**
Alt Nature Preserve, Citizen Coalition for Wildlife and the Environment
Sheridan Park Living Shoreline, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Grand Island Nature Preserves, Funk Nature Preserve, Western New York Land Conservancy
HULM Lab, Friends of Silo City
- 1:00 PM** **Break**

Committee Session

- 2:00 PM** **Tour of Ralph Wilson Centennial Park - Shoreline Restoration and Habitat Creation**
- 3:00 PM** **GESC and ESC Committee Discussion**

**Greenway Ecological Standing Committee and Greenway Ecological Fund
Ecological Standing Committee and Habitat Enhancement and Recreation Fund**

Meeting Summary
July 9, 2025, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

General Meeting

Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Dave Riley	Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment
Nicole Gerber	Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment
Jennifer Dunn	NYS Department of State
Charley Oddo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Emily Root	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Nick DiNardo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Brian Haas	Buffalo State University Great Lakes Center
Ben Szczygiel	Buffalo State University Great Lakes Center
Maris Grundy	Friends of Silo City
Kendra Gorski	Gomez and Sullivan Engineers
Kerrie Gallo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
Emily Dyett	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
Jenny Landry	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (on phone)
Erin Redding	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Cheryl Jobs	New York Power Authority
Andrew Gaerte	Western New York Land Conservancy
Kyra Umrigar	Western New York Land Conservancy
Scott Schlueter	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Amy Roe	US Fish and Wildlife Service

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Erin Redding started the in-person and WebEx meeting and thanked everyone for coming. The attendees introduced themselves.

ESC Pre-proposal Presentations

Tift Nature Preserve Living Shoreline 1.0 Enhancements, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Presented by Charley Oddo, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW)

BNW completed the Living Shoreline Project 1.0 at Tift Nature Preserve in 2018 and 2019. This project area was shoreline to the east of the Tift Nature Preserve visitors center. During the last GESC meeting (April 21, 2025), BNW presented a pre-proposal for a new living shoreline project (Tift Living Shoreline 2.0), to be constructed to the west of the Tift Nature Preserve visitors center. The Committee expressed concerns about the imbalance between the cost and the gained ecological area for the Living Shoreline 2.0 project. However, the Committee showed interest in supporting improvements to the Living Shoreline 1.0 project. BNW shifted focus and revised their project to be for enhancements to the existing Living Shoreline 1.0 Project.

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The current site conditions at the Living Shoreline 1.0 project include;

- Erosion of the fine materials along the shoreline due to the water fluctuations and churning energy (noted in 2020).
- Loss of EAV and SAV plants
- High human foot traffic along the shoreline due to unrestricted access.
- Shoreline meadow plants are ok outside of the human made foot path

The Living Shoreline Enhancement Project will build on top of the existing submerged stone sills and create a rock reef barrier. Additional rocks will be installed as wave shelters to provide shoreline protection during the high-water levels at Lake Kirsty. BNW will add fill/topsoil within that carrier rock reef and install additional native EAV/SAV plants. There will be a dedicated gravel beach for human access/viewing. BNW will use habitat logs on either side of beach to delineate the public access boundary and stop foot traffic.

Estimated Schedule – Q2 2026 design and contractor procurement; Q1 2027 permitting; Q3 2027 construction

BNW ASK = \$780,697. Note: BNW is seeking match for adaptive management work.

Questions/Comments

Scott Schlueter said he was still concerned about the price. He feels that it is a lot of money for a quarter acre of restored habitat. He noted that funding this project would use a quarter of the remaining HERF, and he was not sure that would be best use for the money.

Jen Dunn praised the graphics and the presentation itself. She inquired if BNW was using lessons learned from the 1.0 project in their new design. Charley answered yes, their new design would allow vegetation to readjust for the wave energy and fluctuation water depths.

Scott asked if they put plants there will they grow? Charley answered yes. He said the plants were trying to establish the first time, but BNW did not anticipate the intensity of the water energy at Lake Kirsty.

Erin asked if the area could be enhanced, and plants would grow, without adding to the stone barrier. Charley said that he thinks the plants would grow if soil was brought in, but there would not be an expansive EAV zone.

Charley noted that there is half a million dollars in savings in this pre-proposal vs. the Living Shoreline 2.0 budget. He said that costs are high due to the fact that all the material must be brought in because of the contamination on site.

GESC Proposals Presentations

Buffalo Weather Data Buoy Project, SUNY Buffalo State Great Lakes Center

Presented by Brian Hass, Buffalo State Great Lakes Center

The Great Lakes Center at Buffalo State University is seeking funds to purchase and operate a Weather/Data Buoy in Lake Erie. The proposed buoy location is approximately 1.2 miles off the

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break wall across from the Buffalo Harbor. The buoy location is on the edge of the Greenway area at the head waters of the Niagara River. The buoy will provide real time data that will be accessible to the public through the Great Lakes Observing System (GLOS) website data portal called Seagull.

The buoy will be equipped with an 180-degree view camera and will record the following data every ten minutes:

- Air temperature
- Humidity
- Barometric pressure
- Wind speed /direction
- Wave height
- Dissolved oxygen – via YSI
- Turbidity – via YSI
- Chlorophyll – via YSI
- Solar radiation
- Water temperature profile for 30 ft in 2 ft sections

The Great Lakes Center will deploy the buoy in the spring and then remove it in October. The buoy will be held in place with an anchor and chain. The Great Lakes Center field station is near Black Rock Channel.

Applications for the collected buoy data will include use by local anglers, research, meteorology, USGC, assessing habitats for RTE species and will create a long-term data archive for reference.

This would be the second data buoy installed by the Great Lakes Center, the first buoy is installed in Dunkirk, NY. The Dunkirk buoy has been in service for 8 years and the data is readily available and used by the boating community.

The typical lifespan of a buoy is 10 years. The attached electronics may need to be replaced more frequently.

Buffalo State Great Lakes ASK = \$159,013, includes three years of funding. Note: Match from Buffalo State = \$64,581. The expectation is that after three years, GLOS will take over maintenance cost.

Questions/Comments

Maris Grundy asked if the Seagull platform is a website or an app. It is a website.

Scott asked if the Great Lakes Center has sourced funding for the project after three years. Brian Haas said yes, GLOS will take over maintenance of the buoy.

Emily Dyett asked about the locations of the partners (NOAA/National Weather Service) equipment. Brian Haas said the nearest buoy he is aware of is their Dunkirk buoy. There are NOAA gauges at the Coast Guard Station and there is an unofficial water temperature gauge on the City of Buffalo water intake, but there are no buoys like the proposed in the area.

Brian Haas mentioned that the NOAA also provides an unofficial QA/QC of data.

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Charley asked when the buoy is pulled in at the end of the season. The buoy will be removed in October, in calm weather.

North Tonawanda Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Presented by Emily Root and Nick DiNardo

The proposed project area includes three sections of Tonawanda Creek shoreline within the City of North Tonawanda. This project area is owned by the NYS Canal Corporation and operated and maintained by the City of North Tonawanda. The project will focus on three areas (A, B, C) for improvement of riparian conditions.

Current Site Conditions:

- Area A – 1350 ft between Oliver St and Payne Rd – the area is a rocky eroded shoreline with a lot of invasives.
- Area B – 1300 ft near Sweeny St – the area is mowed grass with a depression.
- Area C – 1 acre near Service Dr boat launch – the area is mowed grass with invasives.

The plans include invasive species management of all three areas followed by native plantings for bank stabilization and increased plant diversity. Educational signage will be added. BNW will explore ideas for a water access feature for Area C.

Estimated Schedule

- July 2026 invasive treatment
- 2027 native planting
- 2028 establishment period

BNW ASK = \$334,582

The city of Tonawanda said they would provide adaptive site management after project closeout.

Questions/Comments

Scott asked if there is any opportunity to get more than 20 feet of meadow. Emily Root said that the City of Tonawanda does not want to offer more lawn area to convert into meadow.

Erin commented that she would like to see a stronger commitment to enhancing and maintaining this habitat from the City of North Tonawanda.

GESC Status Presentations

Alt Nature Preserve, Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment

Presented by Dave Riley and Nicole Gerber, Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment

The following restoration items have been completed at the project: 350 native plantings; planting along trail with protection and maintenance. With funding from Buffalo and Erie County Greenway, CCWE has also built bathroom facilities in the Alt Nature Center, completed trail excavation; and built a parking lot that can hold 30 cars.

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Remaining project items include the installation of educational signage, website updates and trail opening in 2026.

CCWE has used a mulch berm planting method in site with success. They have been following recommendations made in the Niagara River Greenway Best Practices for Native Planting document. This season, spotted sand pipers have been nesting in planted berms, and killdeer have nested in the parking lot.

CCWE and the Western New York Land Conservancy are holding a firefly event at the Alt Preserve the evening of July 9.

Questions/Comments

Amy Roe asked if a description of the mulch berm planting methods that they used are posted on their website. Dave Riley said no, but they are planning on updating their website soon and plan to add that information.

Sheridan Park Living Shoreline, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Presented by Charley Oddo, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

This project consists of three areas (West Pond, Two Mike Creek and the Connective Corridor)

All landowner agreements have been secured.

BNW has selected Wendel as the project design consultant.

BNW has secured \$125,340 in match funds through the NY Sea Grant and will be used toward project construction.

Next steps include site inventory and design development.

Questions/Comments

Scott asked if all the match funds will be used for construction. Charley answered yes.

Erin asked if including sedges in the upland planting area could extend the growing season. Charley said that sedges are not always easy to establish in drier soils, but this will be considered.

Funk Nature Preserve

Presented by Andrew Gaerte, Western New York Land Conservancy

The project is 11 acres and borders the Alt Blvd Paper Trail on Grand Island.

In 2021 WNYLC purchased the property. In 2023, the buckhorn was mowed followed by spot foliar treatments. Currently 2/3 of property native meadow.

They have dispersed native sedges, rushes, grasses seeds and planted 140 trees with a 95% survival rate.

Andrew noted that they think a Barred Owl is nesting on property and plan to set up a tree camera.

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Andrew said that they plan on continuing with buckthorn spot treatments due to neighboring parcel is a seed source.

Questions/Comments

Amy asked if they are studying vernal pools on site more than once per week. Andrew answered no, but they can ask some of their environmental contacts about doing that.

Scott suggested performing spring migration survey, once temperatures above 40 degrees in the spring, go out and look and see what you find.

Erin confirmed that the project can officially close out.

HULM Lab – On site at the greenhouse. There is no PowerPoint.

Presented by Maris Grundy, Friends of Silo City

The nurse setup consists of a nurse hoop house, a netted nurse and an additional outdoor fenced area for woody species. The nurse hoop house stores education totes used on the premises during school engagement events as well as racks of potted plants and shrubs. The netted nurse has a custom irrigation system that allows wetland plants and rock socks to grow in water. The netting was installed on top to reduce the cottonwood seeds infiltrating the soil the nurse plants.

The Silo city grounds have at least 3 native plant artwork installations including a native plant labyrinth, a native willow trellis dome and a native plant modern art piece.

Committee Session

**Greenway Ecological Standing Committee and Greenway Ecological Fund
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Meeting Agenda**

October 22, 2025, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Alt Nature Center, 2489 Whitehaven Rd, Grand Island, NY 14072

or

WebEx Meeting

General Meeting

Arrival/WebEx Sign-in Opening Remarks and Introductions

Niagara Relicensing Ecological Standing Committee (NREC) Presentations

- Centennial Park Shoreline Restoration and Habitat Creation
- Ellicott Island Living Shoreline Implementation
- Freshwater Mussel Propagation for Restoration and Water Quality Improvements in the Niagara Drainage

Alt Nature Trail Presentation

Greenway Ecological Standing Committee Presentations

- East Canal Ecological Renovation at Tiff Nature Preserve
- Niagara Wheatfield Eco-campus Cayuga Creek Living Shoreline Design
- Protecting the Bedell Meadows
- Protecting the Pfohl Property

**Greenway Ecological Standing Committee and Greenway Ecological Fund
Ecological Standing Committee and Habitat Enhancement and Recreation Fund
Meeting Summary**

October 22, 2025, 1:00 PM – 4:30 PM

General Meeting

Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Kerrie Gallo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
Nick DiNardo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Emily Dyett	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
Charley Oddo	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (remote)
Katherine Winkler	Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
Zach Goodrich	Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences, Tiff Nature Preserve
Nicole Gerber	Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment
Dave Reilly	Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment
Steve Buccilli	City of Buffalo
Alex Domaradzki	City of North Tonawanda
Kendra Gorski	Gomez and Sullivan Engineers
Greg Stevens	Niagara River Greenway
Michele Lockett	Niagara River Greenway
Erin Redding	NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
Jennifer Dunn	NYS Department of State (remote)
Cheryl Jobs	New York Power Authority (remote)
Rene Rickard	Tuscarora Nation
Scott Schlueter	US Fish and Wildlife Service (remote)
Corey Krabbenhoft	University at Buffalo (remote)
Isabel Porto-Hannes	University at Buffalo
Andrew Gaerte	Western New York Land Conservancy
Kyra Umrigar	Western New York Land Conservancy

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Erin Redding started the meeting and thanked everyone for coming. The WebEx meeting was open for the people who could not travel to the in-person meeting. The attendees introduced themselves.

HERF Presentations

Ralph C. Wilson Centennial Park Inlet Shoreline Restoration and Habitat Creation

Presented by Katherine Winkler, Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper (BNW) and Steve Buccilli, City of Buffalo

- The coastal project site was previously a bulkhead sea wall constructed in 1940s that was eroding into Lake Erie.

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- The goal of the project was to transform the hardened shoreline into a habitat lagoon featuring climate-resilient transitional slopes. These slopes support a mix of upland and aquatic vegetation. The lagoon was engineered to be self-flushing, preventing stagnant water accumulation, and includes a box culvert to enhance fish passage.
- Construction of the resilient shoreline and lagoon is now complete, resulting in the creation of approximately 6.5 acres of new aquatic upland habitat. The overall height of shoreline was raised 4 feet. The lagoon project was supported by HERF funding totaling \$1.5 million, along with an additional \$20.5 million secured from other sources.
- Maintenance and monitoring of the aquatic vegetation will be carried out during the next year, and the non-surviving plants will be replanted, as the in-water plants are covered under a one-year warranty.
- Next steps include preparing as-built survey drawings and developing a long-term maintenance plan, which will incorporate monitoring for invasive species.
- Katherine highlighted that all contractors involved in the project were local (e.g., Bidco), and that rigorous third-party inspections were conducted throughout the rock placement along the shoreline. She also noted that one storm event had occurred since construction was completed, with no damage sustained.
- Steve Buccilli emphasized that only the portion of the project funded by HERF has been completed, not the entire park project. The full project is expected to be finished by 2027, with an estimated total cost of approximately \$130 million. He noted that LaSalle Park, previously a flat, single-use space, is being transformed into a multi-use park (i.e. amphitheater, sports fields, playgrounds, wildlife habitat, community connection to the waterfront). Upon completion, the park's topography will have significantly changed, with elevation variations ranging from 2 to 30 feet, relatively.

Questions/Comments

- Greg Stevens asked about the whole park budget.
Steve Buccilli said \$1.5 million provided by HERF \$1.5 million for coastal wetland and softened shorelines; \$20.5 million secured by BNW from additional sources; the budget for the entire park is \$130 million.
- Michele Lockett asked if there would be any interpretive signage installed.
Katherine said that interpretive signage is scheduled to be installed fall 2026.
- Rene Rickard asked if their design accounts for protection of the lagoon when the water level drops.
Katherine said yes, the aquatic habitat has a gentle slope to accommodate short and long-term shifts in Lake Erie water level.

Ellicott Island Living Shoreline Implementation

Presented by Charley Oddo, BNW

- Charley noted that BNW had considered requesting an extension to allow for additional plantings. However, due to limited plant availability, they decided not to proceed. This presentation would serve as the final update on the project.
- Charley gave the group an overview of the project. The project site is also known as the Bark Park and is located at the southwest tip of Ellicott Island Park along Tonawanda Creek. The toe of the slope was

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eroding and there were high levels of turbidity due to frequent wave action from boat wakes and unrestricted dog access. The site lacked substantial vegetation, and the existing plant life was low in diversity. The project aimed to stabilize the shoreline, reduce turbidity, enhance habitat and stormwater retention, and minimize disturbances caused by dogs.

- The last update on this project was provided in September 2024. Since then, all plantings have been completed. Irrigation was maintained throughout the summer to support plant health. Interpretive signage has been installed to educate visitors about the newly created habitat and to encourage dog owners to keep pets within designated areas. Plant diversity is showing promising signs of establishment across all planting zones. There have also been sightings of turtle nests and fish within the restored area, indicating ecological improvement. Dog owners and dogs appear to be using their designated zones appropriately, and water turbidity has decreased.
- There was \$38,000 left in the budget, of which 28,937 is marked for construction invoices. BNW's targeted match was \$20,000 and the actual match obtained was \$56,000. Project closeout is scheduled for November 2025.

Questions/Comments

- Scott Schlueter said "nice work" in WebEx message.

Freshwater Mussel Propagation for Restoration and Water Quality Improvements in the Niagara Drainage

Presented by Isabel Porto-Hannes, University at Buffalo

- The Niagara River historically supported 32 different mussel species, but currently only 14 species remain.
- Isabel said the goals of the project are to assess whether current conditions in the Niagara River can sustain introduced native mussels. To assess this, UB first propagated two native freshwater mussel species in a University at Buffalo lab. The river conditions are being tested by placing the juvenile mussels raised in the lab at Niagara River test sites and monitoring survival and growth and compared to those placed at Ellicott Creek and Tonawanda Creek reference sites.
- Two generations of juvenile mussels (Cohort 1 and Cohort 2) have been propagated in the UB lab. One of the main challenges has been maintaining juvenile survival in the lab environment. Factors such as copper in the water, fish parasites, and flatworms have contributed to high mortality rates. To address this, UB implemented a pulse flow system, which appeared to extend the mussels' lifespan. However, UB has not been able to raise a sufficient number of mussels alone to carry out the full experiment. The Columbia Environmental Research Center (CERC) continues to support UB in maintaining juvenile mussel populations, ensuring enough individuals are available for placement at each of the four study sites.
- In the most recent experiment, juvenile mussels were placed at the four study sites in September 2025 and retrieved between October 15–17, 2025. UB is currently analyzing the data. Preliminary findings suggest that mussel growth in the Niagara River was more successful in 2025 compared to the 2024 experiment. However, Beaver Island experienced the highest mortality this year, which may have been caused by air exposure due to fluctuating water levels. It's possible that the containers used were not deep enough, leaving some mussels exposed above the waterline. Currently, all Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 mussels are back in the lab at UB. Two hundred of these mussels will be donated to the Aquarium of Niagara for an exhibit. Some mussels will be released into the wild and

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some will be sent to DEC for toxin testing. Isabel also noted that carbon levels in the Niagara River were lower than those at the control sites. Additionally, she explained that the river's sediment consists of very fine silt clay, which can be limiting for juvenile mussels that require coarser substrate for optimal development. In contrast, adult mussels are better adapted to soft sediments, as they can burrow to escape invasive zebra mussels. The report is expected to be completed by Q2 2026. UB is looking at obtaining additional funds from Great Lakes grant to continue their work.

- This is the third project update presentation and there is one more remaining.

There were no Questions/Comments

Alt Nature Trail

Presented by Nicole Gerber and Dave Reilly, Citizen Coalition of Wildlife and Environment (CCWE)

- Due to the HERF presentations going over time and the rainy weather, the group did not walk the Alt Nature Trail. Instead, Nicole Gerber and Dave Reilly provided the group with the following verbal updates.
 - 9 planting pods have been completed along the trail.
 - Buffalo Ornithological Society performed bird counts in April, May July/Aug and October 2025 and reported seeing numerous bird species responding to the planted meadow. They have that data if people are interested.
 - The elderberry, ninebark and dogwood that were obtained from Silo City are growing well.
 - Project is on budget and CCWE plan to submit a request to Committee asking to reallocation some funds to add educational aspects along the trail.
 - Trail opening is scheduled for late spring 2026.

Questions/Comments

- Greg Stevens asked if any owls were included in the bird counts.
Dave Reilly said that none have been observed but screech owls and barred owl calls have been heard on site.

GESC Revised Proposal Presentation

North Tonawanda Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements

Presented by Nick DiNardo, BNW and Alex Domaradzki, City of North Tonawanda

- Nick and Alex explained revisions made to the North Tonawanda Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements proposal, which was first submitted to the committee during 2025 Cycle 2. Revisions were made in to address GESC's feedback.
- The proposed project area includes three sections of Tonawanda Creek shoreline within the City of North Tonawanda. This project area is owned by the NYS Canal Corporation and operated/maintained by the City of North Tonawanda. The project will focus on three areas (A, B, C) for improvement of riparian conditions.
- The project revisions included:
 - Total project area increased by 0.7 acre (still 1,500 ft of shoreline)
 - Invasive management efforts to be performed in Areas B and C only (no longer A).

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- Area A scaled back
- Area B expanded meadow footprint 7,500 ft
- Area C increased by 24,000 square feet, will include native plantings and an additional 10 trees.
- The sections of shoreline that are not landowner adjacent have been marked for taller plantings, so not to obstruct landowner views.
- Alex that the City of North Tonawanda is committed to performing the post construction maintenance at the project site. They are willing to use the BNW prescribed mowing management schedule for the areas.
- The City of North Tonawanda has a certified terrestrial pesticide applicator on hand for the long-term invasive management.

There were no Questions/Comments

- Erin Redding said she will follow up with the Committee to facilitate discussion and reach a consensus, after which she will communicate the decision to BNW.

GESC Presentations

East Canal Ecological Renovation at Tifft Nature Preserve

Presented by Zach Goodrich, Tifft Nature Preserve

- All project permits acquired (DEC Article 15 & 24, USACE Nationwide 27 an NYSDOS Coastal Consistency Concurrence).
- Phase I Terrestrial work (GESC funded) completed to date:
 - Removal of 63 acres of invasive plants removed, 100 % mulched;
 - Phragmites and knotweed 100% has been treated once and approximately 50% of the mounds are left for secondary treatment. The treatment was done in-house using vehicle wiper application. Tifft found this method to have advantages to foliar spraying, but noted it might be less effective than the foliar treatment application;
 - Deer exclusion fence installed in April 2025. Fencing has had mixed success and BSNS is requesting to use contingency funding for additional fencing with smaller gauge openings;
 - 3,500 trees and shrubs planted;
 - Half of the seeding broadcast complete. Note - the second half of seeds are the species that require cold dormant phase and will be applied before snow;
- Phase II Aquatic work (Great Lakes Program funded) - completed to date
 - Removal of 100% invasive milfoil from East Canal. Treatment occurred in June 2025;
 - Approximately 50% of the native life stakes have been planted in water.
- Zach Goodrich reported that the aquatic work is on hold due to an oil type sheen observed in a small area of the East Canal. Tifft stopped work and notified the NYDEC and NYSDOH. The agencies are currently investigating the situation.

Questions/Comments

- Charley asked what type of deer fence was used.

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Zach answered it was a Deer Buster fence without corner posts. This fence is meant to be temporary about 2 -years to allow for planting to establish.

Niagara Wheatfield Eco-campus Cayuga Creek Living Shoreline Design

Presented by Charley Oddo, BNW

- The project area is located within 10-acres of FEMA 100-year floodplain zone along Cayuga Creek in Sanborn, NY.
- There are two property owners, the Niagara Wheatfield Central School District (955 ft of shoreline on right side) and Niagara Wheatfield Athletic Association (520 ft of shoreline on left side).
- BNW conceptual ideas include restoration of the shoreline, erosion control and native plantings. The Niagara Wheatfield Central School District has public access components as a part of their Eco-Campus vision. The Niagara Wheatfield Athletic Association plan to develop their land parcel extensively with athletic equipment, parking lot and trail. They have said they will not develop along the shoreline or floodplain (within the project area).
- BNW are working on finalizing landowner agreements. The outstanding agreement is with the Niagara Wheatfield Athletic Association. Charley said this agreement is taking longer than anticipated so BNW will need to submit a no cost timeline extension of 1 year to account for the landowner delay.
- BNW has the RFP document ready and they are hoping to have a contractor selected by January 2026.
- Niagara Wheatfield Central School District match obtained is \$50,000. This will be used for the public access design components. The GESC funds will be used for the ecological components.

Protecting the Bedell Meadows

Presented by Andrew Gaerte, Western New York Land Conservancy

- This was a straightforward land acquisition.
- The project is 38.3 acres and borders the Alt Blvd Paper Trail on Grand Island. (The tax records listed the property as 43 acres, but the survey determined it was 38.3 acres.)
- 25 breeding Bobolink have been spotted on site and this is a rare occurrence.
- Earlier this year WNYLC applied for a grant from Cornell's Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative Grant with the Alt Preserve to implement habitat restoration and enhancement across both sites. Cornell asked WNYLC to resubmit for the next year with their updated grassland bird data.
- Next step is to develop management plan.
- They are on budget and should wrap up project by December 31, 2025.

Questions/Comments

- Erin confirmed that the project can officially close out.

Protecting the Pfohl Property

Presented by Andrew Gaerte, Western New York Land Conservancy

- This has been a complicated land acquisition.

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- The original project size was 42 to 54 acres of forest wetland and had 425 feet of Niagara River shoreline. The back 11 acres of the land parcel is cut off by the National Grid transmission line.
- National Grid indicated they were willing to allow WNYLC permanent access to site, however, that is no longer the case. National Grid is only willing to allow a 1-year access easement and WNYLC cannot purchase land without access to site to protect in perpetuity.
- Andrew explained there was also some legal representation issues for the landowner that has prolonged this process.
- Currently, the landowner is willing to sell the property minus the inaccessible 11 acres. WNYLC will be submitting a revised proposal and well as an extension request to the GESC for the purchase of only the accessible areas of the property. The revised proposal will provide updated acreage information for the parcel.

Questions/Comments

- Erin and Rene said they are both in favor of still protecting the Pfohl parcel with the 11 acres removed.
- Greg Stevens said that the Town and National Grid have interest in running a trail along the right-of-way of that transmission line.

Closing Remarks

Erin thanked all the presenters and asked the GESC members to provide any comments to her regarding the revised North Tonawanda Erie Canal Riparian Enhancements proposal.

The next GESC and ESC meeting is scheduled for November 19, 2025, and will be remote meeting.

END OF MEETING.

Alt Nature Preserve – On site Alt Nature Trail tour.

- Erin Redding and Kendra Gorski walked the nature trail with Nicole Gerber and Dave Reilly after the meeting.