

Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan



Prepared by:
The Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan Advisory Committee
&
Toronto and Region Conservation

December, 2002



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This Vision Statement was developed by the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan Advisory Committee and is accompanied by six values which should guide our actions.

VISION STATEMENT

The Cold Creek Conservation Area is an ecologically diverse and sustainable natural area. It is a model of sustainability that can be achieved by protecting and enhancing the area's natural environment while providing outdoor education, cultural and heritage experiences and recreation. Cold Creek Conservation Area is continually improved and managed through self-sustaining revenues and community-based stewardship.

VALUES

To achieve the vision, we should:

- Ensure that this diverse ecosystem is continually protected, monitored and enhanced.
- Ensure that the lands are accessible to the public and provide a learning opportunity about the natural environment, cultural and heritage resources and sound environmental practices.
- Ensure that public uses do not negatively impact the natural environment.
- Encourage adjacent land use that results in maximum environmental benefits and contributes to the form, function and connectivity of the area.
- Ensure that the principles and goals of the Humber Watershed Management Strategy – *Legacy: A Strategy for a Healthy Humber* are supported in the Cold Creek Management Plan and activities and uses contribute to the watershed management mandate.





Photography from TRCA Archives

COLD CREEK CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

C. Angelotti	Resident
Linda Boak	Girl Guides
Donna Cain	Friends of Cold Creek
Marshel Cohen	Resident
Jacque Corneman	Resident
Gordon Craig	Resident
Judy Craig	Resident
Don Frigo	Ontario Bird and Dog Conservation Association
Dennis Ritche	The Labrador Retriever Club of Ontario
Ralph Glagau	Humberlea Church of God
Jerry Gorman	Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association
Ken Hofstetter	Boy Scouts
Vera Howlett	Friends of Cold Creek
Dennis James	Friends of Cold Creek
Judith James	Resident
Anne Kong	Resident
Luciano Martin	Action to Restore a Clean Humber
Dick O'Brien	Chair, The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Linda Pabst	Councillor, Township of King
Rod Powell	Boy Scouts
Vince Principato	Resident
Yamile Rijo	Friends of Cold Creek
Liz Sagermann	Resident
Brenda and Cliff Smith	Residents
Susan Swail	Humber Watershed Alliance
Paul and Sandra Venier	Residents
Bill Wilson	Humber Watershed Alliance
Eric Worsley	Oak Ridges Trail Association

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPING THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Surrounding Cold Creek are rural residential communities and businesses that are concerned with the long-term health and viability of the area. Together with the local and regional municipal governments, these groups have all expressed interest in being involved with the planning and management of Cold Creek. They see a need for a wider variety of protection and ecological regeneration projects, as well as outdoor recreation and education programs at Cold Creek Conservation Area.

2.1 TRCA DIRECTION TO PREPARE THE COLD CREEK CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

At meeting #8/01 held on October 12, 2001, the TRCA approved Resolution #A203/01 which states in part:

“THAT staff be directed to establish a Community Advisory Committee including local residents, community groups, business representatives, agency staff, and area councillors to assist with the development of a Management Plan to guide future uses of the Cold Creek Conservation Area.”

The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority initiated the preparation of a comprehensive management plan for the Cold Creek Conservation Area in January 2002.

2.2 PURPOSE

The TRCA manages nine watersheds and a 52 kilometre stretch of the Lake Ontario shoreline. To do this, the TRCA uses an integrated watershed management approach. Its mandate emphasizes proper environmental management, ensuring that there is long-term health and sustainability.

In the past few years, the Authority has received proposals for several projects for the Cold Creek Conservation Area lands. In order to effectively deal with competing interests and prepare for changes, we need to plan now so that we can preserve the Humber River’s environmental and heritage legacies for future generations. We also need to plan so that the public may enjoy the area through appropriate land use protection, recreation and other uses. A management plan is needed to be used as a framework to determine priorities for future initiatives. It will enable us to update our knowledge on landscape features, condition of infrastructure and identify needs and opportunities in a time of changing financial conditions.

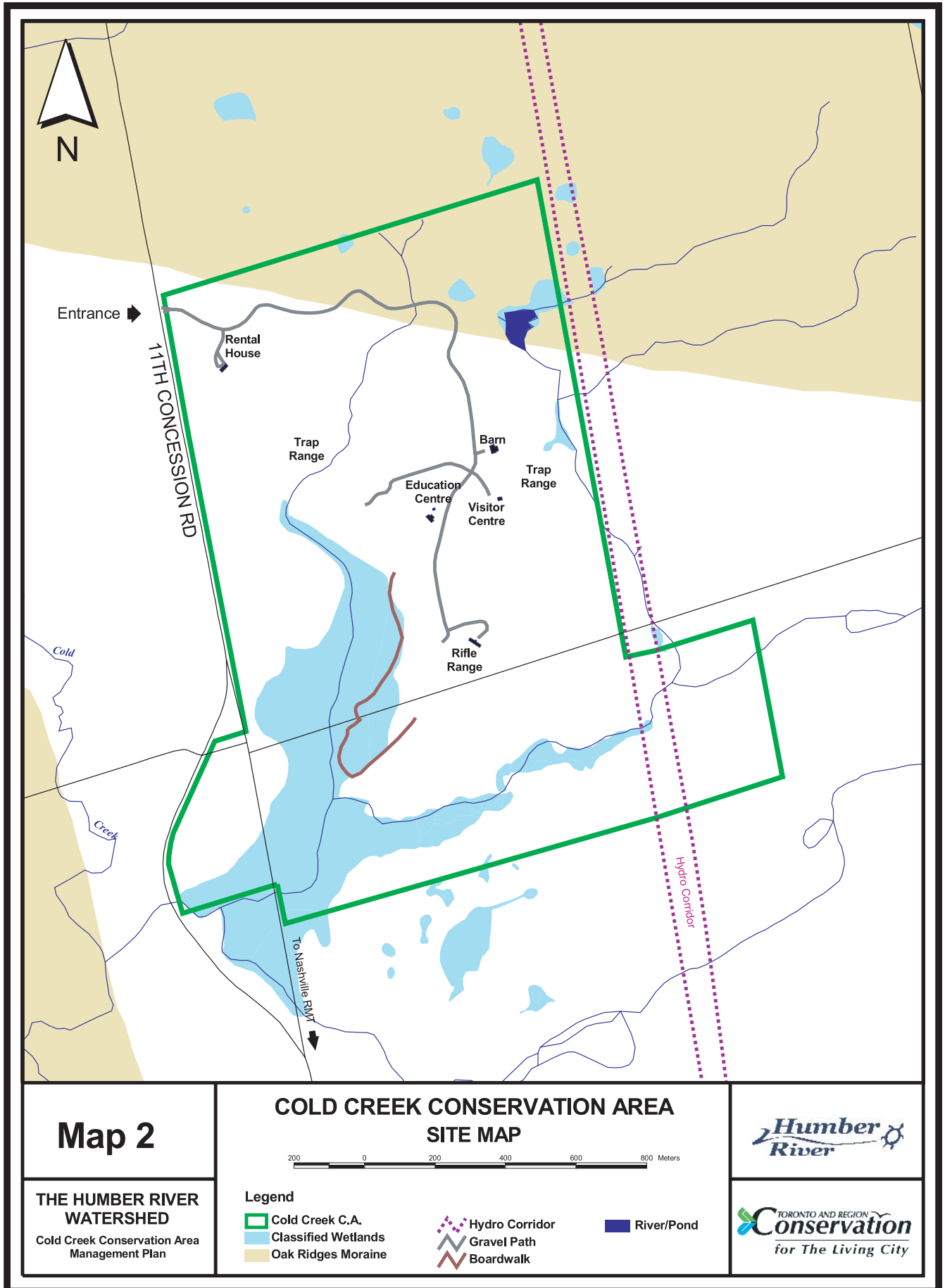
The Management Plan includes a description and evaluation of the property based on relevant plans and policies, landscape features and functions, environmental constraints and opportunities. The Plan will identify specific management zones within which a certain type of activity may be undertaken. For example, within a Natural Environment Zone, habitat creation work may occur; within a Public Use Zone, passive recreation activities may be recommended. The Plan will provide a framework for the TRCA to determine priorities for future initiatives including the protection of natural features and habitat regeneration. The Management Plan will also determine the ecological appropriateness of any proposed public use and ensure that the integrity and diversity of the area are maintained.

The Mission Statement for the TRCA states that “Toronto and Region Conservation Authority is a partnership organization committed to the protection, restoration and celebration of Toronto and Region’s natural environment through the development and application of watershed plans, innovative environmental science and education programs.”

The Authority acts in the community’s interest through advocating and implementing watershed management programs that:

- maintain and improve the quality of the region’s lands and waters
- contribute to public safety from flooding and erosion
- provide for the acquisition of conservation and hazard lands
- enhance the quality and variety of life in the community by using its lands for inter-regional outdoor recreation, heritage preservation and conservation education.

Planning efforts have shown that residents and community groups have grown more concerned with the impact of land use change on the remaining natural landscapes within the GTA. At the same time, user groups, businesses and municipalities have expressed a growing interest in using public lands for a variety of outdoor recreation, ecological restoration and other activities. The provision of public uses on TRCA land must consider economic factors (i.e., budgets, expenditures, benefits), the needs of the community and the needs of the natural landscape to ensure it is protected and managed properly. This Management Plan will strive for the full support of all levels of government, and will seek the commitment of



Map 2

THE HUMBER RIVER WATERSHED
Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan

COLD CREEK CONSERVATION AREA SITE MAP

200 0 200 400 600 800 Meters

Legend

Cold Creek C.A.	Hydro Corridor	River/Pond
Classified Wetlands	Gravel Path	
Oak Ridges Moraine	Boardwalk	

Humber River

TORONTO AND REGION
Conservation
for The Living City

the community and volunteer organizations to establish relationships and work cooperatively to protect, restore, and celebrate the Cold Creek Conservation Area.

The objective of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan is to provide guidance to local, regional and provincial governments and the TRCA in making land use decisions in such a manner that ensures the long-term health and integrity of the natural system is maintained. This Plan will also provide direction on appropriate recreation or other public uses and community stewardship.

2.3 LOCATION, SITE DESCRIPTION AND LAND USE

The Cold Creek Conservation Area is located on Concession Road 11, three kilometers north of the King Side Road within the Township of King midway between the communities of Bolton and Nobleton.

The planning area consists of 190 hectares of conservation lands within the headwater area of the Humber watershed. A portion of the property lies within the “Natural Linkage” policy area of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Two

intermittent streams traverse the area. Cold Creek flows permanently, supports coldwater habitat, and discharges into the main branch of the Humber River south-west of the property. Cold Creek Conservation Area has been designated as an Area of Natural or Scientific Interest (ANSI), and a Biological Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA). The coniferous swamp in Cold Creek is designated as ESA 54. The landscape surrounding Cold Creek is either agriculture or rural residential.

The Cold Creek Conservation Area was originally developed to provide outdoor recreation and education opportunities. The facilities developed at Cold Creek include an education centre, rifle range and a trap range. In 1979, the construction of a control building adjacent to the trap range provided washrooms, warming area, ammunition storage and limited refreshment facilities. Also included was a range for archery and a man-made pond used for dog training. A 300 metre long elevated boardwalk was also constructed in the wetland, which permitted visitors to view the wetland without severely impacting the area.

In the winter months, Cold Creek was utilized for husky dog sled trials and cross-country skiing. The Cold Creek Conservation Field Centre, which was established in

COLD CREEK CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN -WORK PLAN

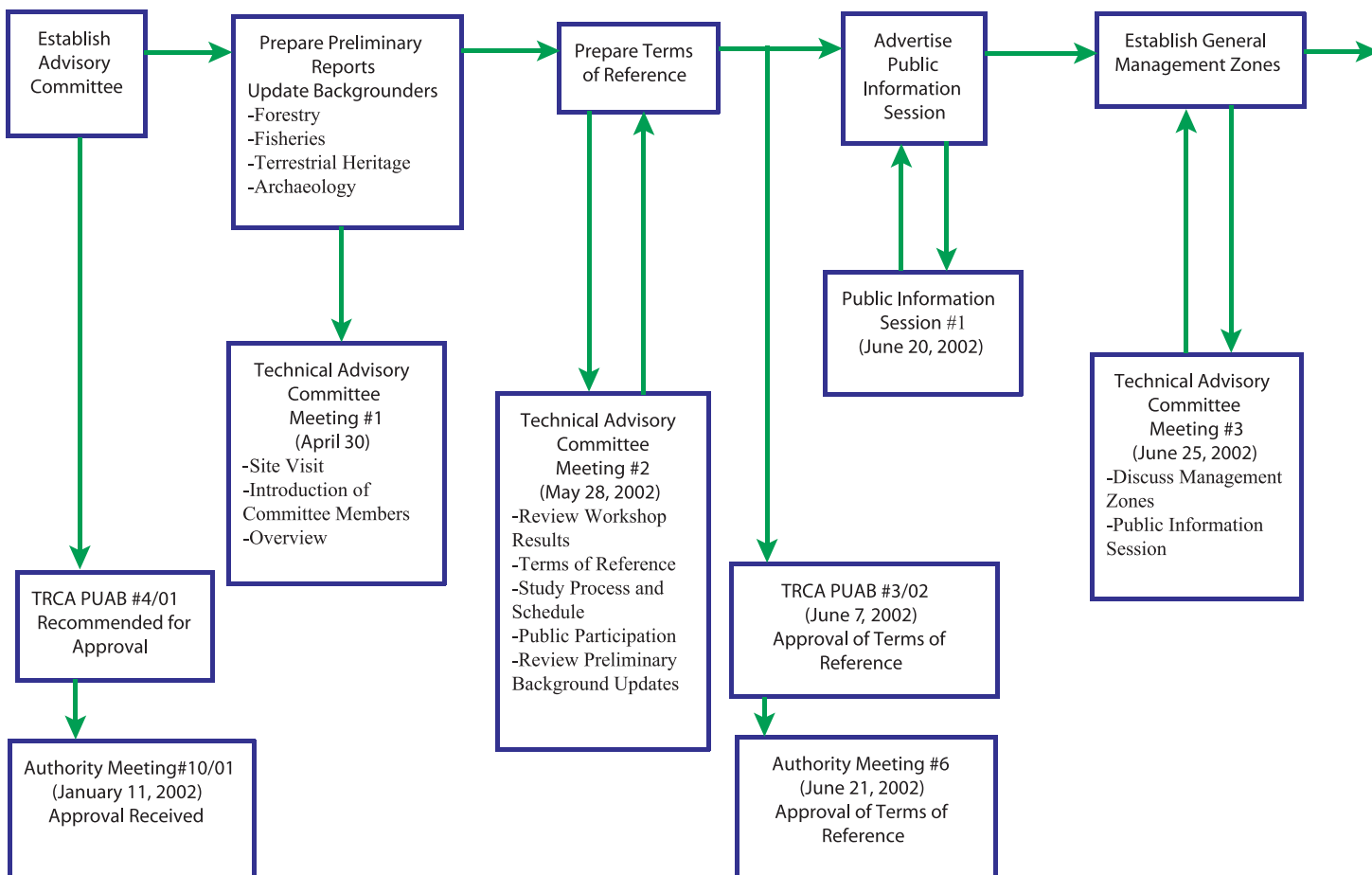


Figure 1: Management Plan Development Process.

September, 1968, was set up to accommodate school classes on a day use basis during the week and to provide a meeting place on weekends for sports clubs such as the Toronto Anglers and Hunters.

The Cold Creek Conservation Area was closed to formal public use in 1990 due to financial constraints resulting from the decision to close the shooting range and loss of associated revenues, as well as other corporate financial pressures.

In 2001, a portion of the property was leased to the Humberlea Church of God for outdoor recreational activities. Informal public use of the area has continued for passive recreation purposes.

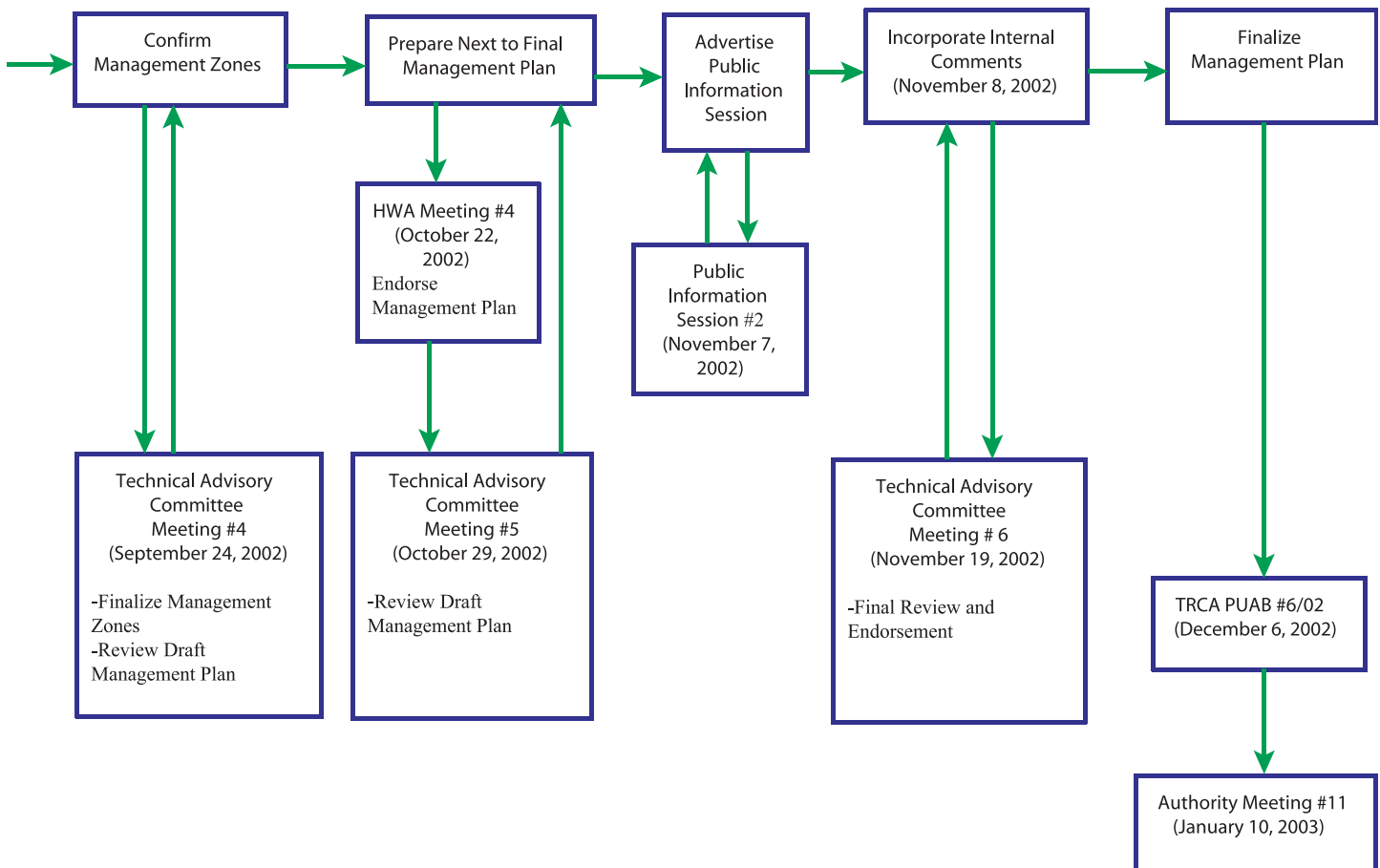
2.4 PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Management Plan was undertaken in two phases. Phase I included background studies of existing resources and facilities and establishment of general management zones for the property. The Advisory Committee was also

established in Phase I to assist TRCA staff with the development of a vision statement for the Plan, finalize the project Terms of Reference, develop management zones and recommendations, and to help facilitate public input. Detailed site specific recommendations were developed during Phase II. The Management Plan was also presented to the Humber Watershed Alliance prior to being taken to the full Authority for approval and endorsement during Phase II.

2.5 THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Representatives from the following agencies, groups and the general community participated on the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan Advisory Committee: Township of King-Elected Officials, Girl Guides of Canada, Boy Scouts Canada, Ontario Bird and Dog Conservation Association, The Labrador Retriever Club of Ontario, Humber Watershed Alliance, Humberlea Church of God, Humber Valley Heritage Trail Association, Oak Ridges Moraine Trail Association, Action to Restore a Clean Humber, Friends of Cold Creek Conservation Area, Community Residents, Chairman TRCA, and Authority Staff.



The Advisory Committee was responsible for the following:

1. Provide technical expertise, monitoring information and advice to the TRCA throughout the development of the Management Plan.
2. Ensure that appropriate staff and members at their respective municipalities/agencies/associations are adequately informed throughout the process.
3. Provide comments and input to suggestions brought to the Advisory Committee.
4. Assist in the identification of issues involving the Cold Creek Conservation Area and make suggestions of appropriate ways to resolving them.
5. Assist the TRCA in presentations and public forums, where appropriate.

The Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan is the result of over eight months of work by this committee and TRCA staff. The management zones and management recommendations that are described in Chapters 5 and 6 were developed through this planning process.

2.6 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The eventual development and use of Cold Creek Conservation Area will be important to area residents and consequently, they must have a meaningful way to provide input to the planning process. To facilitate a wide range of opportunities for input, many techniques were used to generate a high level of awareness.

The public consultation component of developing the Management Plan included the following:

- Discussions with groups and members of the public.
- Local media stories to generate public interest and seek participation.
- Information sessions and fact sheet, to identify needs and opportunities for the area.
- Public meetings to present the background information, the vision, proposed management zones, and management recommendations.

In general, the public response to the proposed Management Plan was favourable. They indicated that they would like to keep most of the planning area protected and preserved. Specifically, members of the public asked for the protection and preservation of the significant black spruce swamp and maintenance of the existing boardwalk. Other members of the public suggested that they would like to see educational opportunities and non-intrusive recreational uses (i.e., facilities and services for families, school groups and

nature activities; dog training opportunities; fishing; cross country skiing; horseback riding and group camping). In general, people wished to see the Conservation Area open to the public with recreational facilities for learning and enjoyment.

2.7 APPROVAL OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

At meeting #11/02, held on January 10, 2003, The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority approved resolution #A282/02, stating:

“THAT the Cold Creek Conservation Plan, dated December 6, 2002, be approved.

THAT horseback riding in the Cold Creek Conservation Area be added to the list of permitted potential activities, but such use not be authorized until appropriate provisions for management of the activity are in place, and such use be in accordance with the recommendations of the Cold Creek Management Plan and any other terms and conditions as may be established by the Authority;

THAT staff be authorized to invite proposals from businesses, groups or individuals for uses of the Cold Creek Conservation Area that are compatible with the Authority's mandate, and are in accordance with the recommendations of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan;

THAT an environmental audit be undertaken on the former trap and rifle ranges to determine what, if any, remedial measures are needed for the areas, and the results of this audit be brought back to the Authority;

THAT staff encourage interested stakeholders to establish a Cold Creek Conservation Area Stewardship Committee made up of interested citizens, interest groups and organizations, to continue to help the Authority in the planning and implementation of the Management Plan;

THAT letters be sent to the members of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Advisory Committee thanking them for assisting in the preparation of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan;

AND FURTHER THAT copies of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Management Plan be sent to the members of the Cold Creek Conservation Area Advisory Committee, King Township, York Region and other appropriate agencies, groups and individuals with a request that the document be used in future land use planning and other watershed management decisions.”