

Canada

Niagara Escarpment



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Declaration date: February 1990

Surface area: 190,270 ha

Administrative divisions: Canada, Province of Ontario; 8 Regions / Cities; 21 Local Municipalities

Human activities:

- Tourism & Recreation
- Farming (tender fruit in south; mixed crops & beef toward north)
- Grapes and wine
- Aggregate extraction (sand, gravel & stone)
- Forestry (furniture-grade & building-grade)

Protection classifications:

Provincial Legislation and Land-use Plan and Regulation administered by government-mandated Niagara Escarpment Commission (1985); Two National Parks; 129 Provincial and Municipal Parks; Provincial Greenbelt – Foodland Conservation Plan; 8 watershed-based Conservation Authorities.

Core = 32.5% Buffer = 60 %

Zone of Cooperation = 7.5 %



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Ecological characteristics:

Ordovician and Silurian Formation (420-445 million years BC); Sedimentary rocks: Limestones, dolostones, shales, sandstones. Maximum average temperature, warmest month: 29.9 C; Minimum average temperature, coldest month -7.1 C; Mean annual precipitation 818.5 mm (13% as snow). North-south corridor crossing two major ecological regions. In south, Carolinian life zone is one of the Most biologically diverse regions in Canada with 40% of province's rare vascular plants. In north, Great-Lakes – St. Lawrence forest: sugar maple, beech & hemlock. Further north, harsher with occasional sub-arctic flora and globally rare alvar habitat. Caves, valleys, cliffs, and crevasses, waterfalls and seeps provide a variety of microclimates along vertical gradients, optimal for oldgrowth cedars and ferns. More than 300 bird species, 55 mammals, 36 reptiles and amphibians, 90 fish and 100 varieties of special interest flora (including 37 types of wild orchids). Headwaters recharge area for several major river systems.



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