



# New York & Long Island Field Offices

<http://nyfo.fws.gov>  
2009



## Congressional District 27: Brian Higgins

*“The most alarming of all man’s assaults upon the environment is the contamination of air, earth, rivers, and sea with dangerous and even lethal materials.”*  
Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

### Buffalo and Niagara Rivers

The Buffalo River natural resource trustee agencies, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Tuscarora Nation, and State of New York have reviewed the contaminant information on the Buffalo River and have determined that conducting a Natural Resource Damage Assessment is warranted. The trustees are responsible for evaluating the injuries associated with contamination of the natural resources of the Buffalo River and determining appropriate actions to restore those resources. A review of the contaminant information on the Niagara River is expected to begin in 2009.



Cayuga Creek, a tributary to the Buffalo River

### Completed Restoration Projects – Love Canal Settlement



Klydel Wetland

The natural resource trustees, led by USFWS, have completed three restoration projects thus far using funds from the Love Canal, 102<sup>nd</sup> Street, and Forest Glen settlements. Two critical wetland parcels were purchased to add to the National Audubon Society’s North Tonawanda (Klydel) wetland preserve. This is a wetland oasis protected as habitat within a rapidly developing area. We have also provided funding for over 100 acres of warm season grassland restoration completed by the Niagara County Soil and Water Conservation District and Tuscarora Nation.

The USFWS has restored and enhanced wetland and warm season grassland habitat at Joseph Davis State Park. Upcoming projects include walleye and common tern restoration projects in Erie County.



Warm Season Grassland Restoration

## Wind Energy Projects

Wind energy has generated much interest from developers due to Federal tax incentives, a State renewable portfolio standard, and the desire for diverse energy sources. These projects have been greeted with mixed reactions by local residents and public officials. We regularly respond to requests for information on projects located within Congressional District 27.

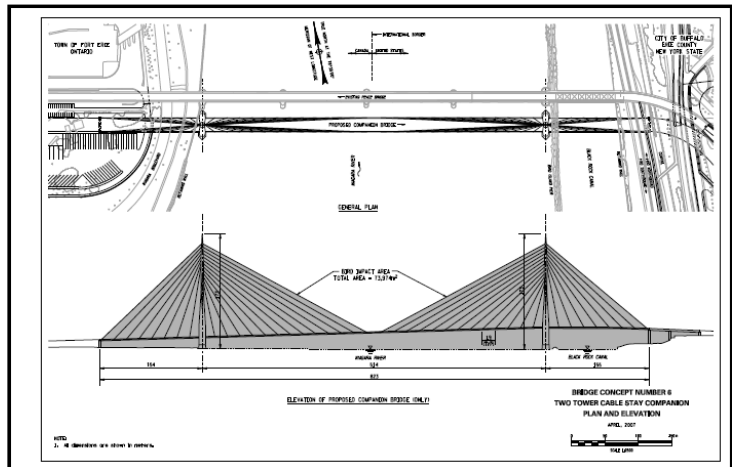
Studies at most of the sites indicate low wildlife use. A few sites, however, may be of concern due to the presence of listed species or concentrations of birds. One of those sites occurs along the Lake Erie Escarpment where thousand of raptors fly north during spring migration. We previously objected to wind turbines in this location and the project was cancelled. However, a different company is investigating the site. We are currently working with this project sponsor to understand the scope of their project and provide recommendations to avoid avian impacts.

In New York State, 13 wind power projects have been constructed having a total nameplate capacity of over 1000 megawatts. We are tracking the progress of wind power projects for at least 107 sites throughout the State, 8 of which are located in Congressional District 27.



## Peace Bridge Project

The Peace Bridge Authority, in cooperation with State and Federal regulatory agencies, is reviewing alternatives to build a companion bridge immediately upstream of the existing Peace Bridge. Traffic congestion, international border security, and maintenance are reasons cited for the new structure. Once a new bridge is built, the existing bridge will be rehabilitated and used to provide additional traffic capacity. Significant numbers of migratory birds use the globally important Niagara River Important Bird Area. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Environment Canada, and the USFWS expressed concern about avian collisions and displacement if a new signature bridge is built adjacent to the existing structure. We continue to work with the Peace Bridge Authority and other involved parties to identify an alternative which minimizes potential impact to migratory birds.



**Turbines, Turbines, Everywhere** Three hydrokinetic projects have been proposed on the Niagara and St. Lawrence Rivers. The two Niagara projects consist of 54 1.3-MW and 36 2-MW turbines (30 feet in diameter) to be located below the falls, for a total of 142.2 MW. Resources of concern include migratory birds (a globally important bird area), American eel, lake sturgeon, Chinook salmon, Atlantic salmon, and steelhead. The St. Lawrence Project consists of 110 1-MW turbines (size to be determined) for a total of 110 MW. Lake sturgeon, American eel, and migratory birds are important resources on the St. Lawrence River.

