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Ohnia:kara... “The neck between two bodies of water”

# INTRODUCTIONS

Darren Platakis, Founder/CEO, Geospatial Niagara – Ohnia:kara Steering Committee

Phil Davis, Indigenous Culture Liaison – Ohnia:kara Steering Committee

Ian Lucas, Board Secretary, Geospatial Niagara – Ohnia:kara Steering Committee



It's a pleasure to be here with you



# What is a geopark?

“.... a single, unified geographical area, where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development ...”

- UNESCO





# What is a geopark?

“Their bottom-up approach of combining **conservation with sustainable development** while involving local communities is becoming increasingly popular.”

- UNESCO





# What is a geopark?

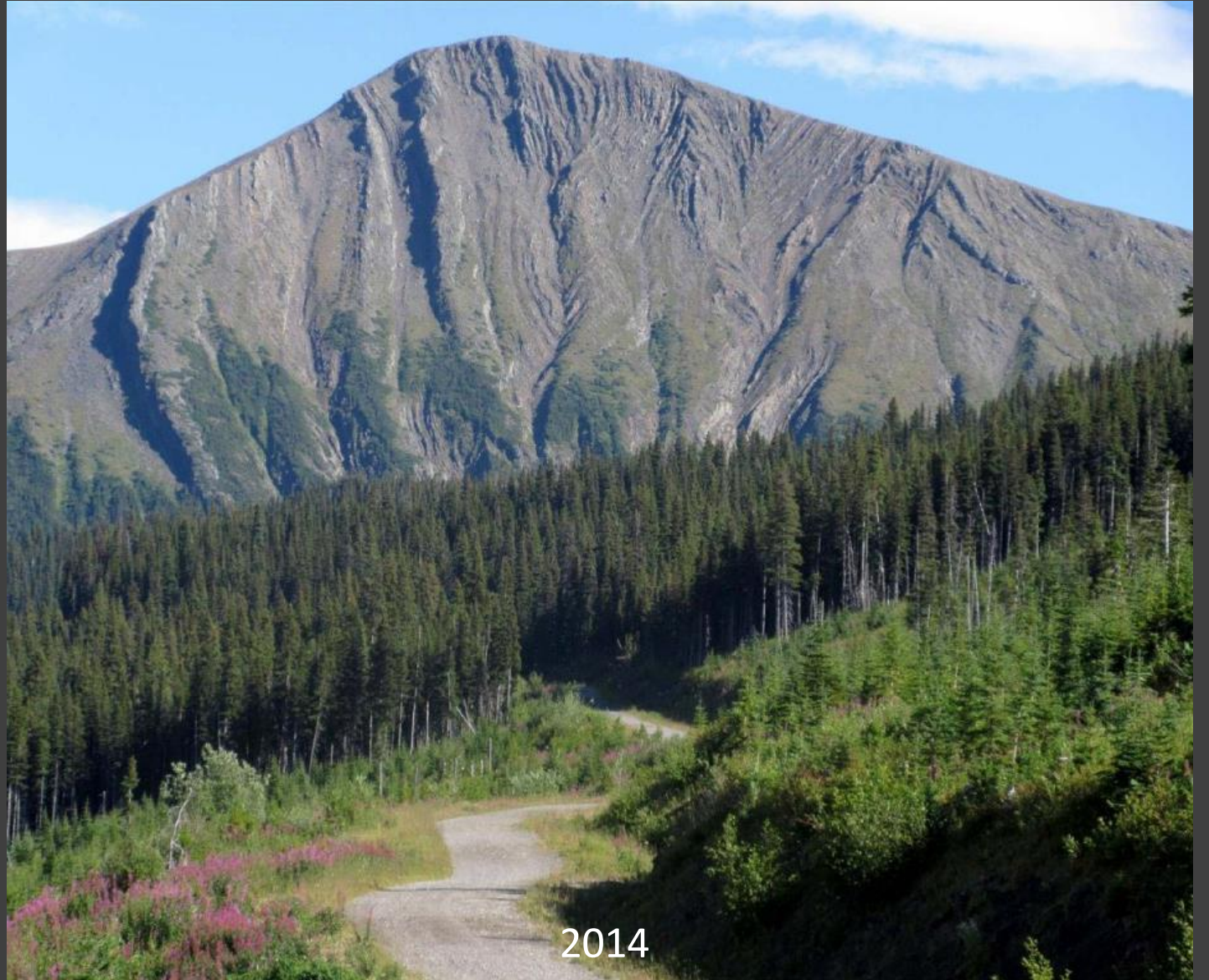
“...those special places around the world that not only tell part of the history of the planet but also celebrate how our geological heritage is linked to all other types of heritage. This forms the basis of community empowerment and the promotion of the area’s sustainable economic development.

- Patrick McKeever

Former UNESCO Chief of Section for Earth Sciences and  
Geohazard Risk Reduction – Secretary of the International  
Geoscience Programme









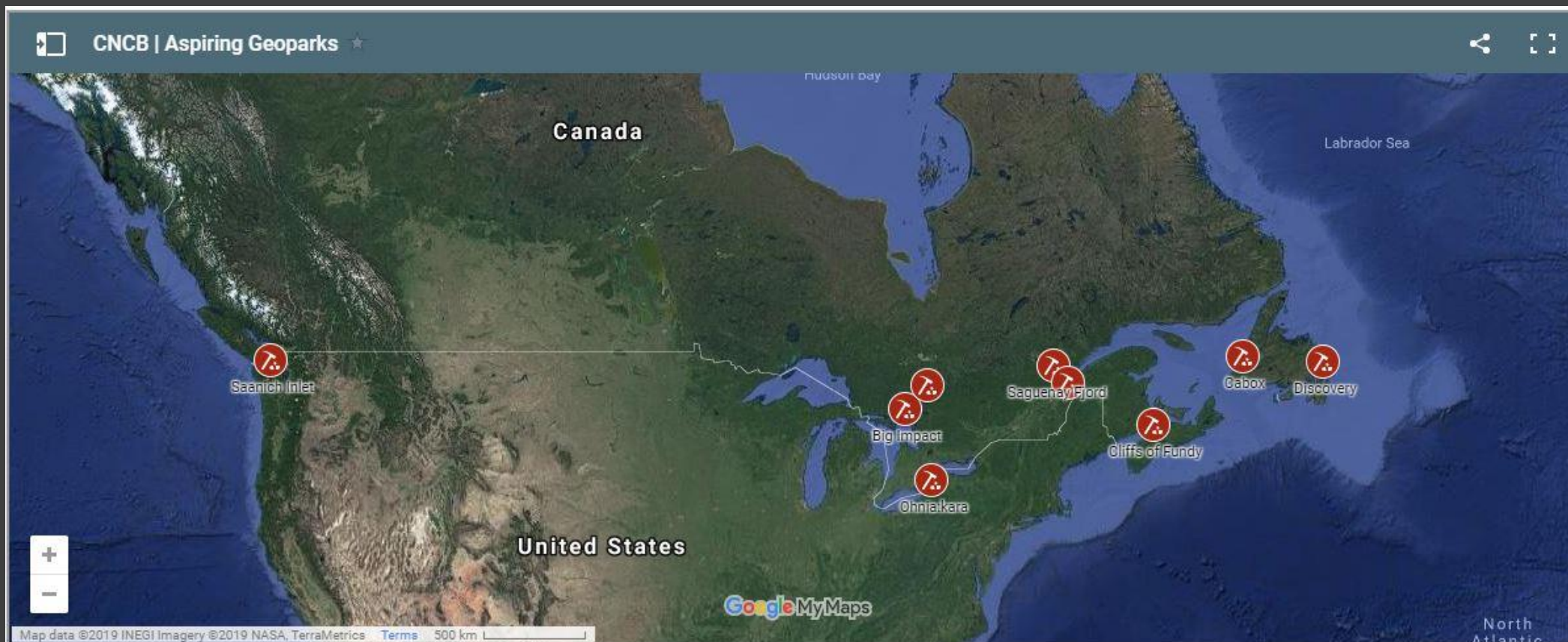
Discovery Aspiring Geopark



Cliffs of Fundy Aspiring Geopark



# Niagara's Aspirations





# UNESCO Global Geopark Pillars



**Education**

**Sustainable Responsible Tourism**

**Cultural Awareness**

**Geoconservation / Geotourism**



# Why Niagara?





# Why Niagara?



<https://www.niagarathisweek.com/news-story/3278563-welland-mastodon-makes-home-at-royal-ontario-museum/>



# Why Niagara?





# Why Niagara?





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# Why Niagara?





# Why Niagara?



Niagaraworldwinetours.com



Niagarafallslive.com



# Why Niagara?



[Friendsoffortgeorge.ca](http://Friendsoffortgeorge.ca)



[niagaracollege.ca](http://niagaracollege.ca)



[Bandbniagara.com](http://Bandbniagara.com)



# Why Niagara?



[friendsoflaurasecord.com](http://friendsoflaurasecord.com)



[Niagaracraftbrewerytorus.com](http://Niagaracraftbrewerytorus.com)



[Niagarajazzfestival.com](http://Niagarajazzfestival.com)



# Why Niagara?



2016 proposal PDF



2016 proposal PDF

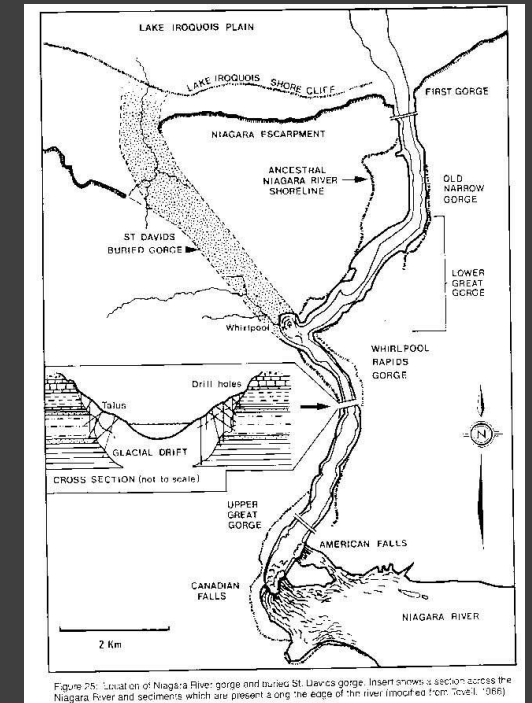


Figure 29. Location of Niagara River gorge and buried St. David's gorge. Insert shows a section across the Niagara River and sediments which are present along the edge of the river (imported from Cowell, 1966).

Creationconcept.info



# Application Dossier



- Formal self-evaluation
- Application to Canadian Committee (Dec 2020-March 2021)
- Canadian committee review – site visit summer 2021
- Update with recommendations 2022
- Operational for one year 2021-2022
- Negotiate final submission to UNESCO - Nov 2022
- UNESCO review – Summer 2023
- UNESCO designation - 2024



# Awareness/Promotional Opportunities

2020 - 10th International Cool Climate Wine Symposium

2021 - Canada Summer Games

2024 - Total Solar Eclipse

2026 - World Cup





Thank you for your time

# COMMUNITY SPONSORS/SUPPORTERS





# Questions



# Answers to FAQs

1. NOT a legislative boundary - No land use restrictions.
2. No restrictions on any economic activity inside the Global Geopark where activity complies with indigenous, local, regional, provincial and national legislation.



# Answers to FAQs

## Geo-tourism

“Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the distinctive geographical character of a place—its environment, heritage, aesthetics, culture, and the well-being of its residents.”

National Geographic

# Answers to FAQs

## Our Ask...

- 1) We are seeking written endorsement of the Ohnia:kara Aspiring Global Geopark by the current council.
- 2) Staff report on the project for full council consideration.
- 3) To evaluate participation in the Ohnia:kara Aspiring Geopark as part of your strategic plans.
- 4) Staff support from time-to-time to help with UNESCO status submission
- 5) Modest funding, related to tangible benefits.
- 6) Link on your municipal website to the Ohnia:kara Aspiring Geopark site.



# Answers to FAQs

1. New job opportunities, new economic activities
2. Diversification of tourism options
3. New entrepreneurial opportunities
4. Supports integrity of place

# Answers to FAQs

## Boost to tourism

### Ex. 1 - Stonehammer Geopark 2015-16

- \$252.4 million - increase of 6.4%
- 1.7 million visitors - increase of 5%
- 726,000 overnight visits - increase of 4.6%

### Ex. 2 - Tumbler Ridge

- 2014 - 2000 visitors
- 2017 - 17000 visitors



# Answers to FAQs

## Boost to tourism

### Ex. 3 - Marble Arch Geopark - installation of a boardwalk

- 2015 - 3000 visitors
- 2016 - 24000 visitors
- 2017 - 60000 visitors

### Ex. 4 - UK Experience - 7 Geoparks across UK

- £18.84 MM/year in NET financial benefit after costs of UNESCO status
- Includes £4.6 MM/year in grants attracted on competitive basis

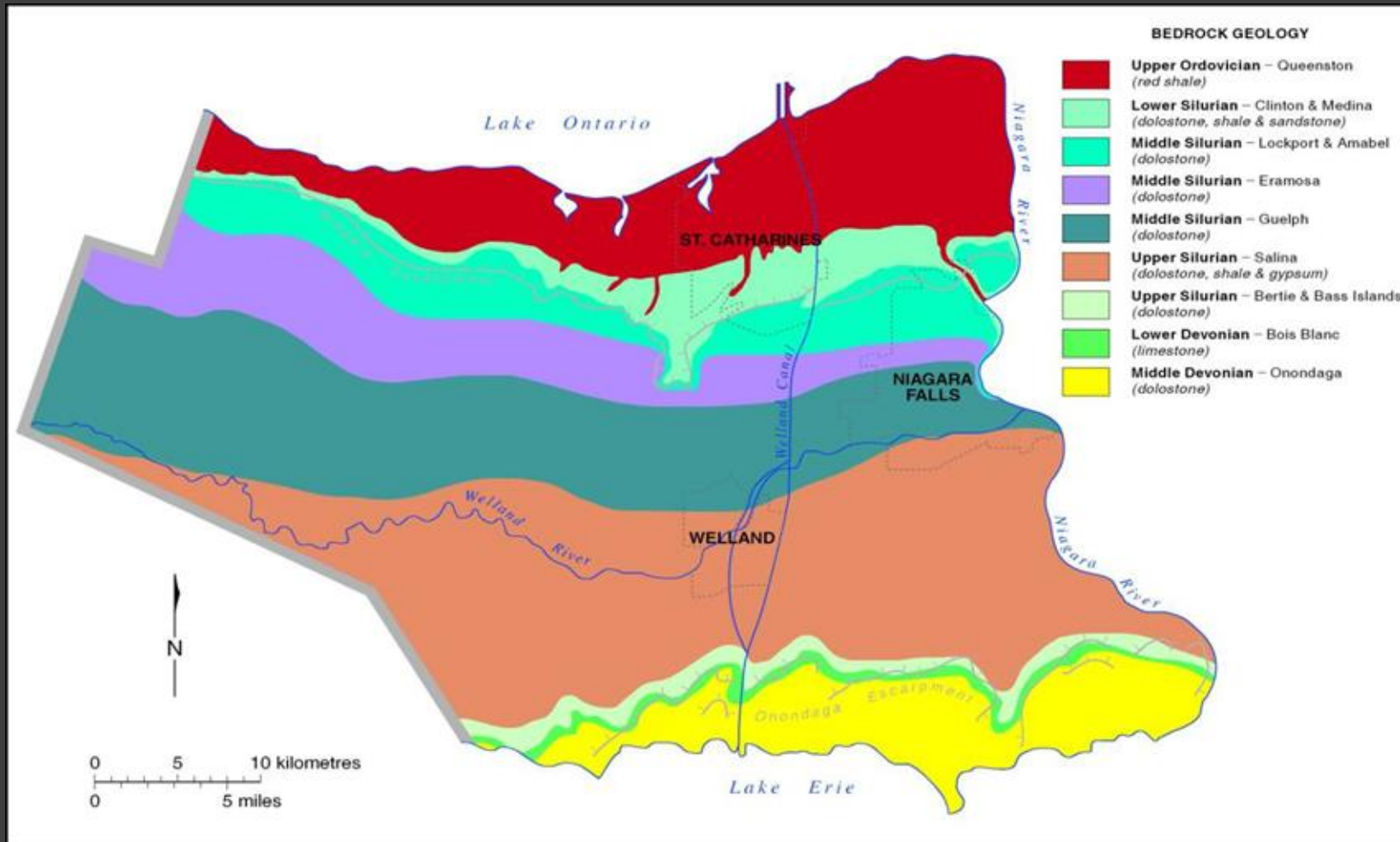
# Answers to FAQs

## Funding Considerations

- Public
- Private
- Corporate
- Memberships
- Research Funding
- Trillium etc.



# Answers to FAQs





**Ohnia:kara UNESCO Global Geopark**

**Towards A More Cohesive Niagara**



UNESCO Global Geoparks - Why Not Niagara?

## **Moving Forward**

Please contact us for more information, and to request an  
Organisation tailored presentation / discussion or a brief meeting  
at the Region:

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