

May 16, 2019

Open Letter to Our Partners and Friends

Have your say on proposed Bill 108

As many of you know, the provincial government has proposed to once again modernize the *Conservation Authorities Act*. There is still time to provide your input on the [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#) posting until **Tuesday, May 21, 11:59 p.m.**

The *More Homes, More Choice 2019 Bill 108* proposes changes to 13 different Acts including the *Conservation Authorities Act* as Schedule 2. This includes new definitions of mandatory Conservation Authority programs and services:

1. *Programs and services related to the risk of natural hazards.*
2. *Programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title.*
3. *Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities as a source protection authority under the Clean Water Act, 2006.*
4. *Programs and services related to the authority's duties, functions and responsibilities under an Act prescribed by the regulations [i.e., "other duties as assigned"]*

If passed, the implications for the on-the-ground work of your local Conservation Authority are unclear. For those activities not considered "mandatory," will Conservation Authorities have resources to deliver these programs and services in your community?

Conservation Ontario, on behalf of all 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario, is proposing to include an additional fifth mandatory program -- "conservation of natural resources" -- to reflect our mandate to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources in a watershed. This would include some of the programs and services that are now part of our core Conservation Authority work, such as:

- inventory and monitoring
- watershed/subwatershed planning
- tree planting and forest management
- natural heritage systems planning
- habitat restoration and creation
- invasive species management
- stewardship and outreach activities

It's time to have your say before it's too late.

Provide your input on the value of programs and services delivered by Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Authorities (CAs) across Ontario.

Comment on the proposed changes to the Act by Tuesday, May 21, 11:59 p.m. at [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#).

Consider submitting comments based on the following:

- Conservation Authorities are a unique made-in-Ontario model that has stood the test of time for over 70 years.
- CAs are good value for money. We are flexible and responsive to the local environmental needs in our watersheds.
- We are a local presence in your community, with boots on the ground. No one else fills the role.
- Since 1946 the core mandate of Conservation Authorities has been the program and services that further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources on a watershed scale. After the devastating floods of Hurricane Hazel, the mandate to control floods and pollution was added.
- Floodplains and drinking water cannot be managed if Conservation Authorities are not looking at the whole watershed system. Protecting people and property and managing natural hazards like flooding requires a watershed view.
- Conservation Authorities are major providers of restoration activities (tree planting, wetland restoration, forest management) and monitoring watershed health in Ontario.
- The natural environment contributes clean air, clean water and a multitude of benefits important to the health and well-being of the people of Ontario.
- We think the province should include an additional mandatory program area of "conservation of natural resources" to capture some of the core programs and services that have long been part of Conservation Authority work.
- Conservation areas and lands provide opportunities for recreation as well as long term protection of natural areas. CAs need the resources to manage these lands and provide for Ontario's growing population.

Have your say

Now is the time to provide your input. No one else is doing what Conservation Authorities do for the people of Ontario.

Comment on the proposed changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* by Tuesday, May 21, 11:59 p.m. at [Environmental Registry of Ontario](#).

Thank you for connecting with us to protect water, watershed management and the people of Ontario.

Sincerely,



Deborah Martin Downs
Chief Administrative Officer, Credit Valley Conservation