

**From:** Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

**Subject:** Ontario Moves Forward with Conservation Authorities Working Group

Good afternoon,

In order to create a practical forum to help our government implement recent changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and ensure conservation authorities and other stakeholder groups have a stronger voice at the table, I have invited 10 individuals to participate in a newly-formed conservation authorities working group.

The working group members, chaired by Hassaan Basit, President and CEO of Halton Region Conservation Authority, have been drawn from a variety of conservation authorities, Conservation Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, as well as the development and agriculture sectors. The full list of members include:

- Hassaan Basit, President and CEO, Halton Region Conservation Authority (Chair)
- Kim Gavine, General Manager, Conservation Ontario
- John McKenzie, Chief Executive Officer, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
- Chris Darling, Chief Administrative Officer, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
- Rob Baldwin, Chief Administrative Officer, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
- Brian Tayler, Chief Administrative Officer, North Bay-Matawa Conservation Authority
- Samantha Lawson, Chief Administrative Officer, Grand River Conservation Authority
- Cathie Brown, Senior Advisor, Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Scott McFadden, Mayor, Township of Cavan Monaghan

The following individuals will also assist the Working Group by providing further perspectives, including on the section 28 Minister's regulation:

- Jason Sheldon, Vice-President, Land Development, Remington Group
- Gary Gregoris, Senior Vice-President, Land Development, Mattamy Homes
- Josh Kardish, Vice-President, EQ Homes
- Michelle Sergi, Director Community Development, Region of Waterloo
- Leslie Rich, Policy and Planning Liaison, Conservation Ontario
- Barb Veale, Director, Planning and Watershed Management, Halton Region Conservation Authority
- Laurie Nelson, Director, Policy and Planning, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

- Mark Wales, Past President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

The Working Group's first task includes looking at the first phase of proposed regulations impacting conservation authorities and their participating municipalities, which will be available for public consultation later this month. The proposed regulations will include:

- details on the programs and services conservation authorities will implement, and how the programs and services may be funded such as:
  - the mandatory programs and services to be delivered by conservation authorities;
  - the proposed agreements that may be required with participating municipalities to fund non-mandatory programs and services with municipal dollars; and
  - the transition period to establish those agreements;
- how conservation authorities will regulate development and other activities to ensure public safety through natural hazard management,
- the requirement for conservation authorities to establish community advisory boards; and
- a Minister's regulation under section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* relating to conservation authority operation and management of lands owned by the authority.

Our government is committed to ongoing collaboration as we work to improve how conservation authorities deliver core programs and services to their communities. Drawing on their extensive knowledge and experience, the working group members we've assembled will provide valuable perspectives to help us make better informed decisions.

We look forward to your feedback as part of our consultation process on the upcoming regulatory postings.

Sincerely,

Jeff Yurek  
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks