



United Counties of  
**Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry**

7a)

**RESOLUTION**

**MOVED BY** Councillor Densham

**RESOLUTION NO** 2025- 159

**SECONDED BY**

**DATE** November 17, 2025

WHEREAS the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses;

AND WHEREAS the municipalities within Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) established South Nation Conservation (SNC) in 1947 and the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA) in 1963;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities currently provide between 25% and 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 3%;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of acres of land, much of which was donated by local residents and entrusted to conservation authorities as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities;

AND WHEREAS Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown corporation that would assume governance responsibilities and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities, with municipal cost apportionment yet to be defined;

AND WHEREAS the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, and standards through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local

representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND FURTHER THAT while the United Counties of SDG supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

AND FURTHER THAT the United Counties of SDG supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and requests that the Province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks, to the local MP and MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, and all municipalities and Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

CARRIED

DEFEATED

DEFERRED

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
WARDEN

Recorded Vote:

Councillor Bergeron	_____
Councillor Broad	_____
Councillor Densham	_____
Councillor Fraser	_____
Councillor Guindon	_____
Councillor Landry	_____
Councillor MacDonald	_____
Councillor McDonald	_____
Councillor McGillis	_____
Councillor St. Pierre	_____
Councillor Williams	_____
Warden Lang	_____



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November 19, 2025

Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
Via Email: [premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)

Public Input Coordinator  
Via Email: [ca.office@ontario.ca](mailto:ca.office@ontario.ca)

Dear Premier Ford,

**Re: Opposition to Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities**

Please be advised that at its Regular Meeting held Monday, November 17, 2025, the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville passed the following resolution respecting the matter referenced in the above subject line:

**195-11172025**

**Moved By:** Councillor Neufeld

**Seconded By:** Councillor Patterson

**Whereas** the Conservation Authorities Act, 1990 (the "Act"), originally enacted in 1946, was established to allow municipalities to form conservation authorities that are equipped to develop and deliver local, watershed-based conservation, restoration and natural resource management programs on behalf of the province and municipalities;

**And whereas** there are thirty-six (36) conservation authorities in Ontario, each of which is distinct and reflects the unique environmental, geographic and community needs of its watershed;

**And whereas** on October 31, 2025, the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks announced the Government's intention to introduce legislation which would amend the Act to create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven (7) regional conservation authorities.

**Now therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Kingsville:**

- Wishes to formally state that it opposes the consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities without knowing the full financial and operational impact to municipalities and the conservation authorities; and,

- Directs the Acting Clerk to forward a copy of this resolution to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Todd McCarthy, the Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Anthony Leardi, MPP, Essex, Lisa Gretzky, MPP Windsor West, Andrew Dowie, MPP Windsor-Tecumseh, Trevor Jones, MPP Chatham-Kent-Leamington, AMCTO, AMO and all Ontario Municipalities.

**Carried.**

Please accept this correspondence as an official confirmation of Council's decision with respect to the same. Any questions may be directed to the undersigned.

Sincerely,



Angela Toole  
Acting Manager of Municipal Governance/Clerk  
519-733-2305 ext. 223  
[atoole@kingsville.ca](mailto:atoole@kingsville.ca)

cc. Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks  
Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Anthony Leardi, MPP, Essex  
Lisa Gretzky, MPP, Windsor West  
Andrew Dowie, MPP, Windsor-Tecumseh  
Trevor Jones, MPP, Chatham-Kent-Leamington  
Essex Region Conservation Authority  
Conservation Ontario  
AMCTO  
AMO  
All Ontario Municipalities

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November 21, 2025

SENT VIA EMAIL - [minister.mecp@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mecp@ontario.ca)

The Honourable Todd J. McCarthy  
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks  
College Park, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
777 Bay Street  
TORONTO, Ontario  
M7A 2J3

Dear Minister McCarthy:

On October 31, 2025, the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) announced proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act (CAA)*, to establish the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to provide leadership, governance, and strategic direction to Conservation Authorities (CAs). The agency will be responsible for:

- Developing a single digital permitting platform;
- Streamlining and standardizing service delivery by setting provincewide performance, standards  
as well as maintaining centralized data and updated floodplain mapping; and
- Overseeing the consolidation of Conservation Authorities.

The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks are proposing that the agency would require the local Conservation Authorities to pay for the costs of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency.

Additionally, the MECP has introduced an amendment to the Conservation Authorities Act that outlines the proposed boundaries for establishing Regional Conservation Authorities. The proposed consolidation will entail, including reducing the number of Conservation Authorities from 36 to 7.

MECP has indicated that they plan to consult with stakeholders, municipalities, conservation authorities, and Indigenous communities. This consultation includes a policy proposal notice period posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario for 45 days, inviting feedback on the

proposed boundaries and criteria for the regional consolidation of Ontario's 36 CAs with a deadline of December 22, 2025.

The Town understands that the timelines for the proposed CAA amendments are as follows:

- Consultation occurs throughout the Q1 2026;
- Conservation authorities operate within current governance structure until after the 2026 Municipal election; and
- Changes come into force January 1, 2027.

The Town of Goderich has identified several concerns relating to the proposed CAA amendments:

- What is the cost of establishing and operating the proposed Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA)? The OPCA would require significant resources while local watershed advisory boards would still be needed to guide priorities and provide oversight.
- What is the anticipated total cost of consolidating the 36 Conservation Authorities to 7?
- As a local organization, the Maitland Conservation is responsive to community needs. Municipalities, landowners and community partners drive the services and priorities of the organization. A move to the OPCA, and the consolidation of Conservation Authorities, would mean less municipal input on service priorities, yet member municipalities currently financially contribute over 80% of the MVCA's operating budget, while the Province provides approximately 2%.
- Will the needs of rural communities and the agricultural sector will be adequately recognized and prioritized in this consolidation? Particularly since the lead Conservation Authority, for each of the 7 new regional conservation authorities, is expected to be in an urban setting in each region.
- A core priority for Maitland Valley Conservation Authority is reducing the risk of loss of life and community damage caused by flooding and erosion. MVCA are responsible for approving development in or near natural hazard areas, ensuring that new construction and additions are not at risk from flooding or erosion in floodplains or along the Lake Huron shoreline.
- MVCA's permitting process is efficient and consistent. In 2024, the average time to process all types of permits was just 5.7 days. The average time for reviewing and issuing permits by all conservation authorities is 12.5 business days.

- From start to finish, MVCA staff work closely with landowners, emphasizing customer service and helping them identify safe building locations outside hazardous areas. Will the proposed digital permitting platform be able to match MVCA's turnaround times and maintain this high level of customer experience? Additionally, what will the costs be for developing, implementing and maintaining this new platform?

The Town of Goderich encourages the Provincial government to partner with the current Conservation Authorities to build capacity and support local solutions to watershed issues. This will require a multi-year commitment to reinvesting in Conservation Authorities.

In order to protect Ontario's prosperity, the Town would like to see an emphasis placed on developing and protecting the health of watersheds. They are the foundation of not only our economic prosperity but our life support system as well. Clean water, diverse forests and healthy soils directly support key sectors like tourism, forestry and agriculture, which in turn support economically strong local communities.

Healthy Lake Huron (HLH) is a model of collaboration between federal, provincial and county agencies, 5 Conservation Authorities and several community groups. HLH has been successful in supporting stewardship initiatives aimed at improving water quality along the Lake Huron shoreline. Using this collaborative approach across all the watersheds in Ontario to build healthy watersheds would result in effective, cost-efficient results.

Working seamlessly together, we can achieve superior results.

Respectfully,



Janice Hallahan  
Chief Administrative Officer

Cc: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario  
The Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Rural Affairs, and MPP for Huron-Bruce  
The Honourable Rob Flack, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
Environmental Registry of Ontario  
Ed McGugan, Chair of the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority