



Via email

May 16, 2025

**Re: Proposed Amendments to *Ontario Heritage Act* ERO #025 - 0418**

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As Chief of the Kashechewan First Nation ("**Kashechewan**"), I am writing to express our serious concerns about the Province of Ontario's proposed amendments.

The relationship between the Crown and Indigenous Peoples is governed by the principle of the honour of the Crown, which requires the Crown to act with integrity, fairness, and in good faith when engaging with Indigenous Peoples. This includes meaningful, timely, and good-faith consultation before decisions are made that may adversely affect Nation's rights and interests.

Like Indigenous peoples across Ontario, for generations, our people have relied on and continue to rely on the lands and waters within our territory for fishing, harvesting, hunting, trapping, camping, and spiritual and cultural practices. These activities are fundamental to Kashechewan's identity, survival, and governance. We continue to exercise our rights throughout the territory in physical, cultural, and spiritual ways that stem from the land and inform our decision-making.

Ontario must ensure that proposed amendments, and Ontario's conduct flowing from the amendments affecting resources, lands, waters and cultural history respect *Constitution Act* 35 rights.

**Proposed Amendments to *Ontario Heritage Act* ERO #025-0418**

Bill 5 proposes to revise the *Ontario Heritage Act* to allow the Minister to exempt a property from archaeological assessments in service of provincial priorities. Cultural sites where archaeological work is required are the historical sites of First Nations across Ontario. This is where our ancestors lived and the cultural objects uncovered during archaeology work tells our stories.

Exempting sites from archaeology work is incompatible with the goals of reconciliation, and such amendments risk further harm and degradation to our sacred sites, cultural artifacts, and ancestral remains, which hold profound spiritual and cultural importance to our people and Nation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hosea Wesley", is written over a light blue rectangular stamp or background.

Chief Hosea Wesley  
Kashechewan First Nation