

FOR SUBMISSION TO THE <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-0694>

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Removal of Protections for Wasaga Beach Provincial Park

The Wasaga Beach Climate Action Team strongly opposes the Ontario government's proposal to remove provincial park protections from significant portions of Wasaga Beach Provincial Park and to sell these public lands for "integration into the broader development of Destination Wasaga."

The park's ecological integrity depends on the specialized stewardship of Ontario Parks staff — expertise no municipal body can replicate. The freshwater dunes, held together by globally imperiled marram grass, require careful, science-based management. Likewise, Beach Areas 1, New Wasaga, and Allenwood provide critical nesting habitat for the endangered piping plover. Since their return in 2008, these birds have coexisted with tourism only because of active protection and monitoring by Ontario Parks. The current proposal would strip protection from nearly all their nesting areas.

Independent experts agree: the Town of Wasaga Beach lacks the capacity and specialized knowledge needed to safeguard these fragile ecosystems while supporting intensive recreational use. As Ontario Nature and others have emphasized, every stretch of beachfront within the park — from Beach Area 1 to Allenwood — is part of a rare and ecologically significant ecosystem that benefits all Ontarians, including those who may never visit in person.

Wasaga Beach Provincial Park, like all Ontario parks and conservation reserves, belongs equally to all Ontarians. These lands are held in trust for the public and must never be sold to developers or transferred to local control. In a time of escalating climate impacts, it is more urgent than ever to protect these sensitive areas, not dismantle their protections.

This will mark the first time that a piece of Ontario Parks land will be transferred to a municipality. Such a move sets a dangerous precedent. They are proposing changes to the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006 (PPCRA), which could open the door for other parks to face the same fate.

We therefore call on the Government of Ontario to maintain full provincial park protection for every inch of Wasaga Beach Provincial Park. These lands must remain publicly owned, ecologically protected, and provincially managed — for the benefit of current and future generations.



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