



TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR

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Mayor
Jim Vezina

Clerk-Treasurer
Lorna Buob

Councillors
Alex Crane
Brendan Rea
John Sobolta
Carly Torkkeli

November 26, 2025

Honourable Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Macdonald Block Mailing Facility
77 Wellesley St W, 11th Fl
Toronto, ON
M7A 1N3

minister.mepc@ontario.ca

Dear Minister McCarthy:

Council, at their meeting held on November 24, 2025, passed a resolution calling on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, water-shed conservation authorities. The Township of O'Connor is opposed to the proposed Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority boundary configuration outlined in the Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257.

I have enclosed a copy of the resolution for your consideration and trust you will give it your full consideration and support.

Yours truly

Lorna Buob
Clerk-Treasurer

Encl.

Cc: Kevin Holland, MPP – Thunder Bay – Atikokan kevin.holland@pc.ola.gc.ca
Lise Vaugeois, MPP, Thunder Bay – Superior North LVaugeois-QP@ndp.on.ca
Marcus Powlowski, MP – Thunder Bay – Rainy River marcus.powlowski@parl.gc.ca
Hon. Patty Hajdu – MP Thunder Bay – Superior North patty.hajdu@parl.gc.ca
Association of Municipalities of Ontario amo@amo.on.ca
Conservation Ontario bfox@conservationontario.ca
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority tammy@lakeheadca.com
All local municipalities
All Conservation Authorities in Ontario

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR
R. R. #1 KAKABEKA FALLS, ONTARIO POT 1W0

NOVEMBER 24, 2025 NO. 10

Moved by J. Sobolta

Seconded by C. Torkkeli

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 Lakehead Region established the Neebing Valley Conservation Authority in 1954 which enlarged to the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) in 1963;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities currently provide approximately 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 5%;

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 hectares 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 Township of O'Connor 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 THAT while the 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 THAT the Township of O'Connor 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 THAT the Township of O'Connor is opposed to the proposed "Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257;

AND THAT the Township of O'Connor recommends that the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority form the "Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority";

AND THAT the Ministry engage directly with affected municipalities of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments;

AND THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations and to:

- the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and his Opposition critics;
- local Members of Provincial Parliament;
- local Members of Parliament;
- the Association of Municipalities of Ontario;
- Conservation Ontario;
- All local municipalities; and
- All Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

J. Veziina
MAYOR

CERTIFIED TRUE COPY
TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR

CARRIED

DEFEATED

RECORDED VOTE

ALEX CRANE

BRENDAN REA

JOHN SOBOLTA

Lana Buob
CLERK-TREASURER

CARLY TORKKELI

JIM VEZINA