



DRAINAGE SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

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The Drainage Superintendents Association of Ontario (DSAO)

<https://www.dsao.net/> is an organization that supports our members through networking, professional development and representation through a collective voice. Drainage superintendents are responsible to their local municipalities for the implementation of the Ontario Drainage Act. Through this work we work closely with our local Conservation authorities (CAs) regularly.

The DSAO acknowledges the province's continued recognition of the vital role that conservation authorities play in delivering watershed management across Ontario. The proposal to consolidate 36CA's into 7 regional CA's lacks sufficient detail or assurances on how local decision making, knowledge and community involvement will be maintained in a regional model. CAs were founded on a community-based framework with local municipal governance and watershed scale decision making. The amalgamations could fundamentally and permanently diminish local decision making and responsiveness to the community.

There has been no meaningful consultation with municipalities and stakeholders. There has been no specific evidence-based analysis that has been provided to justify a larger, regional conservation authority or the need for a provincial agency providing oversight that was historically the responsibility of a specific ministry. There has been no cost benefit analysis provided on how the new model will be more efficient. There has been no clear transition/implementation plan provided. The risks associated with consolidation at the proposed scale outweigh the potential benefits.

Most CAs in rural Ontario are meeting or exceeding provincial guidelines when it comes to supporting the drainage industry. Larger regional CAs may lead to a less responsive organization with:

1. Field staff having less authority to make decisions
2. less field staff resulting in slower response time
3. loss of local expertise that is knowledgeable
4. loss of local offices over time with requirement to report to a larger regional office
5. more levels of management. Negatively affecting speed of reviews and approvals
6. more administration and policies
7. All of the above resulting in increased costs to municipalities and higher fees.

The DSAO asks for actual full consultation with stakeholders. The DSAO feels that it will be very important to maintain strong local voice and governance that is accountable to the residents of the watershed that are able to provide transparent and timely responses.

If you require more information, please contact me by email at dsao@dsao.net

Regards:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lorne Franklin', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lorne Franklin, L.E.T., C.E.T, rcca, CAN-CISEC 0078
President, Drainage Superintendents Association of Ontario