



December 19, 2025

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

RE: Quinte Conservation Board of Directors position on the regional consolidation of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities

Dear Minister McCarthy,

Please be advised that the following resolution QC-25-92 was passed at the Quinte Conservation Authority Regular Board Meeting held on December 18, 2025:

WHEREAS the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks have posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 (Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities), proposing to reduce Ontario's 36 conservation authorities to 7 regional entities as part of a broader restructuring that would create a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to provide centralized oversight and direction under the Conservation Authorities Act; and

WHEREAS under this consolidation proposal, the Quinte Conservation (QC) would be merged into a new "Eastern Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" together with Central Lake Ontario CA, Kawartha Region CA, Otonabee Region CA, Ganaraska Region CA, Lower Trent Region CA, Crowe Valley CA and forming a single organization stretching from Oshawa, Kawartha Lakes, Hastings County, Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory and areas within Lennox & Addington; and

WHEREAS QC, in 1994 amalgamated the Napanee Region Conservation Authority, Moira River Conservation Authority and Prince Edward Region Conservation Authority forming a 6000 square kilometer jurisdiction to provide integrated services for 18 municipalities, including flood forecasting, planning and regulations, communications, education, stewardship, source water protection and enabling services that are fully supported by our municipal partners; and

WHEREAS the QC Board of Directors acknowledges and supports the province's goals of improved efficiency of watershed management, through the implementation of digital applications and permitting system, consistent policies, flood standards, fees, and technology

but find the proposed “Eastern Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority” configuration would:

1. Create a geographically vast and administratively complex entity, joining northern, rural and fast-growing south-eastern municipalities through the province with little shared watershed connection or economic alignment;
2. Dilute or eliminate the local accountability and municipal partnership, contrary to the principle that decisions are best made closest to the communities they serve;
3. Generate substantial transition expenses – including Human Resources, governance restructuring, IT migration and policy harmonization, that would divert resources from front-line service delivery and delay measurable outcomes, contrary to the province’s own business planning principle of “value for money, cost containment and service continuity”; and
4. Risk greater uncertainty and delay for developers, builders and farmers, as local permitting offices and staff familiar with site conditions are replaced by distant regional structures, making it more difficult for applicants to obtain timely local advice, resolve condition issues or expedite housing and infrastructure approvals that support the province’s “Build Faster” agenda; and

WHEREAS consistent policies, and resources across the existing conservation authorities’ boundaries could be achieved through direction and tools such as technical guidelines provided by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks or Conservation Ontario; and

WHEREAS conservation authorities are locally based, grassroots organizations formed by municipal governments in response to the challenges posed by a changing landscape; especially, the increased exposure to flooding and erosion hazards and the resulting risks to lives and property. In the case of QC, this vision has proved a successful model for over 75 years; and

WHEREAS QC, in 1994 amalgamated the Napanee Region Conservation Authority, Moira River Conservation Authority and Prince Edward Region Conservation Authority forming a 6000 square kilometer jurisdiction to provide integrated services for 18 municipalities, including flood forecasting, planning and regulations, communications, education, stewardship, source water protection and enabling services that are fully supported by our municipal partners; and

WHEREAS QC, with the guidance and support of our 18 member municipalities, demonstrates fiscal prudence in conservation delivery, ensuring stable growth through stable funding. QC has successfully leveraged funding to support programs and services that are locally important and are driven by community engagement through QC's Strategic Plan and our Asset Management Plans; and

WHEREAS conservation authorities across the province operate efficiently by working in close partnership with member municipalities. This structure enables resources to be directed toward on-the-ground initiatives that advance our mandate while addressing local community needs, achieving an effective balance in scale, management and service delivery; and

WHEREAS being front-line means being responsive and accountable to the community by delivering the services that are essential and valued to the best interest of the community. The front line of provincial priorities on housing, the economy, infrastructure, and climate resilience are in the decisions between municipalities working together to address issues around floodplain (and hazard) protection and resilient upland and landscape management. Further, our staff and Board are responsive and accountable to the needs of the watershed community, while meeting or exceeding provincial service standards. Our staff and Board are reachable through publicly available contact information. Local governance and direction combined with local service provision allows QC to continue to be responsive to our community; and

WHEREAS the QC Board of Directors recognizes that the staff of QC serves a multitude of Eastern Ontario communities facing vastly different climatic, hydrological and infrastructure realities, and being surrounded by the Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario and a number of local lakes, with properties subject to coastal erosion and flood-prone areas, which would be ill-served by a larger overarching administrative structure extending over more than 16,000 square kilometres;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

THAT, the Quinte Conservation Board of Directors does not support the proposed "Eastern Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration as outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257; and

THAT, meaningful modernization can occur within the current watershed-based governance framework; and

THAT, the QC Board of Directors endorses further provincial evaluation of a more focused specific model as a geographically coherent, cost-effective and locally accountable alternative that advances the government's priorities of efficiency, red-tape reduction and timely home construction; and

THAT, the Board asks that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks engage directly with affected municipalities and conservation authorities across Eastern Ontario before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments; and

THAT, a forthcoming ERO response at the approval of the QC Board of Directors be forwarded to the Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations; and

FURTHER THAT, a letter from the Chair containing this resolution, and ERO response, be forwarded to:

- Minister Todd McCarthy, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; and
- Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (CA Office); and
- Hassan Basit, OPCA Chief Conservation Executive; and
- MPP Tyler Allsopp (Bay of Quinte); and
- MPP Ric Bresee (Hastings-Lennox and Addington); and
- MPP John Jordan (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston); and
- Warden Bob Mullins, Hastings County
- Warden Nathan Townsend, Lennox and Addington
- Warden Gerry Lichty, North Frontenac
- Mayor Steve Ferguson, Corporation of Prince Edward County
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario; and
- Rural Ontario Municipal Association; and
- Conservation Ontario;
- All 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario; and
- 18 local municipalities within Quinte Conservation.

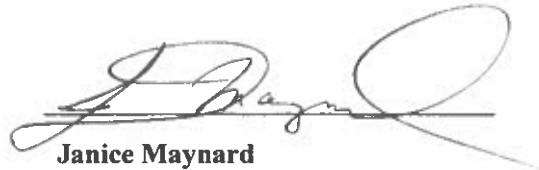
CARRIED - UNANIMOUSLY

Thank you for the opportunity to engage in this discussion and provide constructive feedback and advocacy on this matter.

Sincerely,



Don Kuntze
Chair
Quinte Conservation Board of Directors



Janice Maynard
Vice - Chair
Quinte Conservation Board of Directors

Cc:

Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (CA Office)
Hassan Basit, Chief Conservation Executive (Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency)
MPP Tyler Allsopp (Bay of Quinte)
MPP Ric Bresee (Hastings-Lennox and Addington)
MPP John Jordan (Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston)
Warden Bob Mullins, Hastings County
Warden Nathan Townsend, Lennox and Addington
Warden Gerry Lichty, North Frontenac
Mayor Steve Ferguson, Corporation of Prince Edward County
Association of Municipalities of Ontario
Rural Ontario Municipal Association
Conservation Ontario
36 individual Conservation Authorities in Ontario
18 local watershed municipalities within Quinte Conservation

