



250 Thorold Road West, 3rd Floor, Welland, Ontario L3C 3W2
Telephone 905.788.3135 | Facsimile 905.788.1121 | www.npca.ca

Sent via E-mail: minister.mecp@ontario.ca

August 21, 2019

The Honourable Jeff Yurek
Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Honourable Minister:

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) is in receipt of your letter dated August 16, 2019 regarding the mandate of conservation authorities.

It is important to state that NPCA has been fully involved in the Province's review of The Conservation Authorities Act leading up to the Royal Assent of Bill 108.

We have supported the Province's vision regarding our mandate as defined by Bill 108 - natural hazards (flooding), conservation lands and drinking source water protection. We continue to work with Conservation Ontario, our municipalities and the Province to ensure that our communities are safeguarded from flooding, have clean drinking water and have conservation lands that are protected and maintained.

However, we are concerned with the reference that conservation authorities should start to "wind down" programs if they are not mandated, for the following reasons:

1. The Province was to provide further information on mandated programs, through regulations, which were to be circulated for consultation. Without this, we do not know the details of specific programs that are mandated versus non-mandated.
2. Bill 108 allows all conservation authorities to establish MOUs with our municipalities and partners for non-mandated programs. We are just embarking on our 2020 budget discussions which will include the opportunity to discuss MOUs.
3. As our Board of Directors is awaiting further information from the Province, we have not had the opportunity to discuss the specifics of mandated versus non-mandated programs with our Board of Directors, who consist of both elected and citizen appointees representing watershed municipal and community interests.
4. As the Province now contributes around 8% (number to be confirmed by noon tomorrow) of our total budget, we believe that our participating municipalities and Board should have, at minimum, the next several months to determine which programs should be considered through our 2020 budget discussions. We understood that a transition period was part of the ongoing review of mandated versus non-mandated programs.

Minister, we look forward to our ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Province, our municipalities and all of our partners as we craft an important mandate and vision for the future of conservation authorities.

Sincerely,

Original Signed by

Dave Bylsma, Chair
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

Copy:
NPCA Board of Directors
Watershed MPP's
Watershed Regional Chair and Mayors
Watershed Clerks and CAOs
Kim Gavine, General Manager, Conservation Ontario