

**Ministry of Natural
Resources and Forestry**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère des Richesses
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Ontario

354-2023-1404

November 22, 2023

Her Worship Andrea Horwath
Mayor
City of Hamilton
mayor@hamilton.ca

Dear Mayor Horwath:

Thank you for writing to Premier Doug Ford and me sharing the Hamilton City Council endorsement of the resolution passed by Hamilton Region Conservation Authority's Board of Directors regarding changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has made a series of changes to conservation authorities' programs and operations, including scoping conservation authorities' review and commenting role with respect to development proposals and other matters under the prescribed acts to areas within their core mandate. These changes further focus conservation authorities on protecting people and property from the impacts of natural hazards and provide clear and consistent rules and processes for conservation authorities, municipalities and home builders.

This government recognizes the important role wetlands play in Ontario for climate change resiliency, flooding and recreational opportunities. The changes to Ontario's Wetlands Evaluation System focused on removing duplicative requirements and streamlining the evaluation process. We also launched the \$30 million Wetlands Conservation Partner Program which represents one of the largest investments in wetland restoration in provincial history.

Our government understands the important role conservation authorities play in the communities they serve, and we will continue to work with conservation authorities as regulatory changes are implemented.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Graydon Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Graydon" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Smith".

The Honourable Graydon Smith
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

c: The Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Jaime Tellier, Corporate Administrative & Records Management Coordinator,
Hamilton Conservation Authority
Sal Salamone, Legislative Assistant, City of Hamilton