

*March 22.2024*

*Re: Changes to Regulation 41/42*

*To Whom It May Concern:*

As someone who lives Dundas, I am writing to express my grave concern at Regulation 41/24 which weakens the authority of our province's Conservation Authorities at a time when climate change requires very careful monitoring of waters and floodplains and careful, technical screening of development.

It is my understanding that on Feb 16, 2024, a day when families were occupied celebrating Family Day, this regulation was filed with no legislative or public input and will quickly come into effect on April 1, 2024. This legislation gives Graydon Smith, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, the unprecedented power to override the Conservation Authorities. This is an outrageous abuse of power.

The specific aspects that I find unacceptable in this new regulation are:

- New Ministerial powers to issue orders and permits and override the CA's decision to deny permits if requested by applicants. The Minister's decision is FINAL
- The prevention of Conservation Authorities to prevent development of lands within their currently protected areas.
- The reduction of the development buffer around a provincially significant wetland from 120m to only 30m.
- The definition of a watercourse will be changed from: *an identifiable depression in the ground*, to: *a defined channel having a bed and banks or sides*.

- The elimination of consideration of "natural heritage" on or adjacent to water and eco-systems when granting permits. Does this mean our waterfalls, the Bruce Trail?

The impacts of these changes are far-reaching, unpredictable and irreversible, the potential for increased flooding and fire risks, run off, and our vital eco-systems.

As proud citizens of Ontario, we have already expressed loudly and clearly our concerns and outrage at encroaching on the Protected Greenbelt Lands and our support for the Conservation Authority's stewardship of these Lands.

We are inspired by the Hamilton Mayor, Hamilton City Councillors and the Conservation Authority for standing up to the Provincial Government and we back their stance 100%.

Please don't force our hands to mount another campaign as we did to save the Greenbelt. It will not sit well with the voting public. Give the Conservation authorities back their full roles – they do it well.

Hands off the Conservation Authorities!

Sincerely,

A Dedicated and Passionate Citizen of Greater Hamilton Area

Mary Ann Frerotte