



## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

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**Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025**

**Immediately following the Public Meeting – Zoning By-Law Amendment(s) at 5:30 p.m.**

**Tay Valley Municipal Office – 217 Harper Road, Perth, Ontario**

**Council Chambers**

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### **ATTENDANCE:**

**Members Present:** Councillor Angela Pierman  
Reeve Rob Rainer  
Deputy Reeve Fred Dobbie  
Councillor Wayne Baker  
Councillor Greg Hallam  
Councillor Korrine Jordan  
Councillor Keith Kerr  
Councillor Marilyn Thomas

**Staff Present:** Amanda Mabo, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk  
Aaron Watt, Deputy Clerk  
Sean Ervin, Public Works Manager (left at 6:58 p.m.)  
Ashley Liznick, Treasurer (left at 6:58 p.m.)  
Noelle Reeve, Planner (left at 7:25 p.m.)

**Regrets:** None.

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.  
A quorum was present.

### **2. AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

- i) Addition under Priority Issues: Appointment of Hockey Volunteer.
- ii) Addition under Closed Session: Identifiable Individual.

The agenda was adopted as amended.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

None at this time.

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS**

i) **Public Meeting: Zoning By-Law Amendment(s) – November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

The Minutes of the Public Meeting – Zoning By-Law Amendment(s) held on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 were approved.

**5. DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

i) **Presentation: 2024 Audited Financial Statements.**

K. Mahon provided the presentation and report that was published as a separate package to the agenda.

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township adopt the 2024 Audited Financial Statements as presented.”

**6. PRIORITY ISSUES**

i) **Report #FIN-2025-11 – 2026 Property Tax Due Dates.**

The Treasurer gave the presentation that was attached to the agenda.

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the interim tax due dates be on February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026;

**THAT**, the final tax due dates be on July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2026 and September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026;

**AND THAT**, the necessary by-law come forward at the next Council meeting.”

ii) **Report #PW-2025-25 – Old Brooke Road and Cooks Road Options.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, Council agrees to consider stopping up and closing Cooks Road as outlined in Report #PW-2025-25 – Old Brooke Road and Cooks Road Options and call a Public Meeting as per the Road Closing and Sale Policy.”

The Treasurer and Public Works Manager left at 6:58 p.m.

iii) **Report #PD-2025-21 – Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities.**

The Planner introduced a report as provided by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority – *attached, page 10*, and a resolution of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry – *attached, page 26*.

Members discussed the impact of the amalgamation of local Conservation Authorities into Regional Authorities. In collaboration with Planners from Lanark, Leeds Grenville, and Frontenac Counties, Members supported submitting a letter of opposition to the amalgamation.

The messaging of the letter would be to emphasize:

- the seriousness of water resources as the defining environmental issue of the century
- that Conservation Authorities play a critical role in local watershed management
- that financial reserves should not be amalgamated; funds should remain in the watershed where they were collected
- that environmental educational programs continue to be supported
- that preserved lands should not be sold
- the importance of local conservation offices and their continued staffing and operation
- the concern that regional control will erode local representation, decision making, and protection over local geography, geology, and wildlife
- regions be established among areas that share similar geological and topographical features, and that at least one (1) representative from each municipality be included

Recommendation to Council:

**“WHEREAS**, water resources and water availability is the defining issue of this century due to the impacts of climate change which Tay Valley Township has already experienced (through dry wells and below normal river levels this summer and floods in 2017 and 2019),

**AND WHEREAS**, Ontario’s Conservation Authorities play a critical role in watershed management, flood mitigation, drought mitigation, and public safety;

**AND WHEREAS**, Tay Valley Township has already experienced negative consequences of centralized management of water resources from afar (the Ministry of Natural Resources staff in Toronto have previously directed the depth of water at the Pike Lake Dam be lowered during a pickerel spawn event resulting in the death of the pickerel);

**AND WHEREAS**, municipalities must retain a strong, meaningful voice to ensure that local knowledge, local priorities and local risks are fully considered;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy;

**AND WHEREAS**, local municipalities established the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority in 1966 and the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority in 1968 and currently provide over 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides less than 5%;

**AND WHEREAS**, municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable services standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

**AND WHEREAS**, Bill 68 (Schedule 3) and ERO posting 025-1257 propose to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities and create the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown agency that would assume oversight over conservation authorities and have the ability to levy authorities to cover its costs;

**AND WHEREAS**, the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, standards and policies across all conservation authorities through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, Tay Valley Township strongly urges the Provincial Government of Ontario to withdraw all sections of Bill 68 related to Amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, Tay Valley Township calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT**, the Province be requested to re-introduce any proposed changes as a standalone bill to proceed through the regular legislative process (First and Second Readings, Committee Review, stakeholder submissions and public consultation) to ensure the impacts on watershed management, environmental protection and public safety are fully and transparently captured;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** while Tay Valley Township supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** Tay Valley Township supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity and program delivery across the province, and requests that the province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** Tay Valley Township calls on the province to consider any potential amalgamation of Conservation Authorities on the basis of their abiotic, biologic and cultural characteristics (i.e., the Raisin and South Nation Conservation Authorities have clay plains with wide rivers vs the RVCA, MVCA and the Cataraqui are situated on forested bedrock with numerous streams including the Rideau Canal running through them);

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** the province maintains the local knowledge of the unique natural resources, weather and climactic features of the RVCA and MVCA watersheds through local staffing;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** the current assets (including financial reserves and land trusts) of the RVCA and MVCA remain with them to recognize their fiscal prudence and are not used to subsidize conservation authorities with fewer assets or developed upon;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT,** the province ensure that any future governance framework for Ontario's Conservation Authorities includes robust and clearly defined municipal representation, recognizing municipalities as essential partners in protecting watershed and mitigating risks;

**AND BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT,** a copy of this resolution be sent to the Premier of Ontario, Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ontario Minister of Finance, to the local MPP, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, the local conservation authority(s), and all municipalities in Ontario."

The Planner left at 7:25 p.m.

The Committee recessed at 7:25 p.m.

The Committee returned to session at 7:32 p.m.

- iv) **Report #CAO-2025-38 – Election – Use of Municipal Resources – Policy.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Election – Use of Municipal Resources – Policy be adopted;

**AND THAT**, the necessary by-law be brought forward.”

- v) **Report #CAO-2025-39 – Election – Municipal Employee Involvement Policy.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Election – Municipal Employee Involvement – Policy be adopted;

**AND THAT**, the necessary by-law be brought forward.”

- vi) **Report #CAO-2025-40 – Multi-Year Accessibility Plan Update.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan be approved;

**AND THAT**, the necessary by-law be brought forward.”

- vii) **Report #CAO-2025-41 – Proposed New Road Name – Turtle Ranch Road.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the necessary by-law to name an existing Private Road to Turtle Ranch Road, as outlined in Report #CAO-2025-41 – Proposed New Road Name – Turtle Ranch Road, be brought forward for approval.”

- viii) **Appointment of Hockey Volunteers.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township appoint the following volunteer for the Tay Valley Hockey Program, subject to the Criminal Records Check Policy:

- Dustin Hart.”

## **7. CORRESPONDENCE**

- i) **25-11-25 – Letter – Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Streamlining and Standardizing Municipal Development Processes.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the Letter from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing received on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2025 regarding Streamlining and Standardizing Municipal Development Processes, be received as information.”

- ii) **25-08-27 – Council Communication Package.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the 25-08-27 Council Communication Package be received for information.”

- iii) **25-11-26 – Council Communication Package.**

Recommendation to Council:

**“THAT**, the 25-11-26 Council Communication Package be received for information.”

## **8. COMMITTEE, BOARD & EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION UPDATES**

- i) **Bolingbroke Cemetery Board** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- ii) **Committee of Adjustment.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- iii) **Fire Board** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- iv) **Library Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- v) **Pinehurst Cemetery Board** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- vi) **Lanark County OPP Detachment Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- vii) **Green Energy and Climate Change Working Group** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- viii) **Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Board.**

The Committee reviewed the summary and minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- ix) **Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board.**

The Committee reviewed the summary and minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- x) **Lanark County Traffic Advisory Working Group** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

xi) **County of Lanark.**

The Deputy Reeve reported that:

- Beckwith Township Reeve Richard Kidd was acclaimed as the 2026 Lanark County Warden, he has now been Warden on four different occasions
- Tay Valley Township Councillor Korrine Jordan was presented with a 2025 Lanark County Award of Excellence during the County's annual award ceremony on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**9. CLOSED SESSION**

i) **CONFIDENTIAL: Identifiable Individual.**

The Committee moved "in camera" at 7:52 p.m. to address a matter pertaining to personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees regarding an identifiable individual and the Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk and Deputy Clerk remained in the room.

The Committee returned to open session at 8:04 p.m.

The Chair rose and reported that Council received an update on an identifiable individual.

**10. DEFERRED ITEMS**

\*The following items will be discussed at the next and/or future meeting:

- *None.*

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

The Committee adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

  
Chairperson

  
Aaron Watt, Deputy Clerk



# **PRIORITY ISSUES**



## 8.0 Proposed Consolidation of CAs and Creation of Provincial Agency Report #: 01-251127

To: RVCA Board of Directors  
From: Sommer Casgrain-Robertson  
General Manager  
Date: November 24, 2025 (updated Nov 28)

<input type="checkbox"/>	For Information
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Adoption
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attachment – 3 pages

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### Purpose

To seek input and direction from the Board regarding two proposed changes to conservation authorities: consolidation and the creation of a provincial agency.

### Background

#### Creation of Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

On November 6, 2025 the Government of Ontario introduced [Bill 68, Plan to Protect Ontario Act \(Budget Measures\), 2025 \(No. 2\)](#). Schedule 3 of the Bill proposes to amend the *Conservation Authorities Act* to establish the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency.

- The role of the Agency would be to provide centralized leadership and oversight of conservation authorities including the transition to consolidated regional CAs.
- The Minister could issue directions to the Agency, and the Agency could issue binding directions or non-binding guidance to conservation authorities.
- The Agency would also be authorized to recover its costs, including from CAs.

The Bill received Royal Assent on November 27, 2025 and there was no public consultation. For a full summary of what is proposed in Schedule 3 of Bill 68, please see **attached table**.

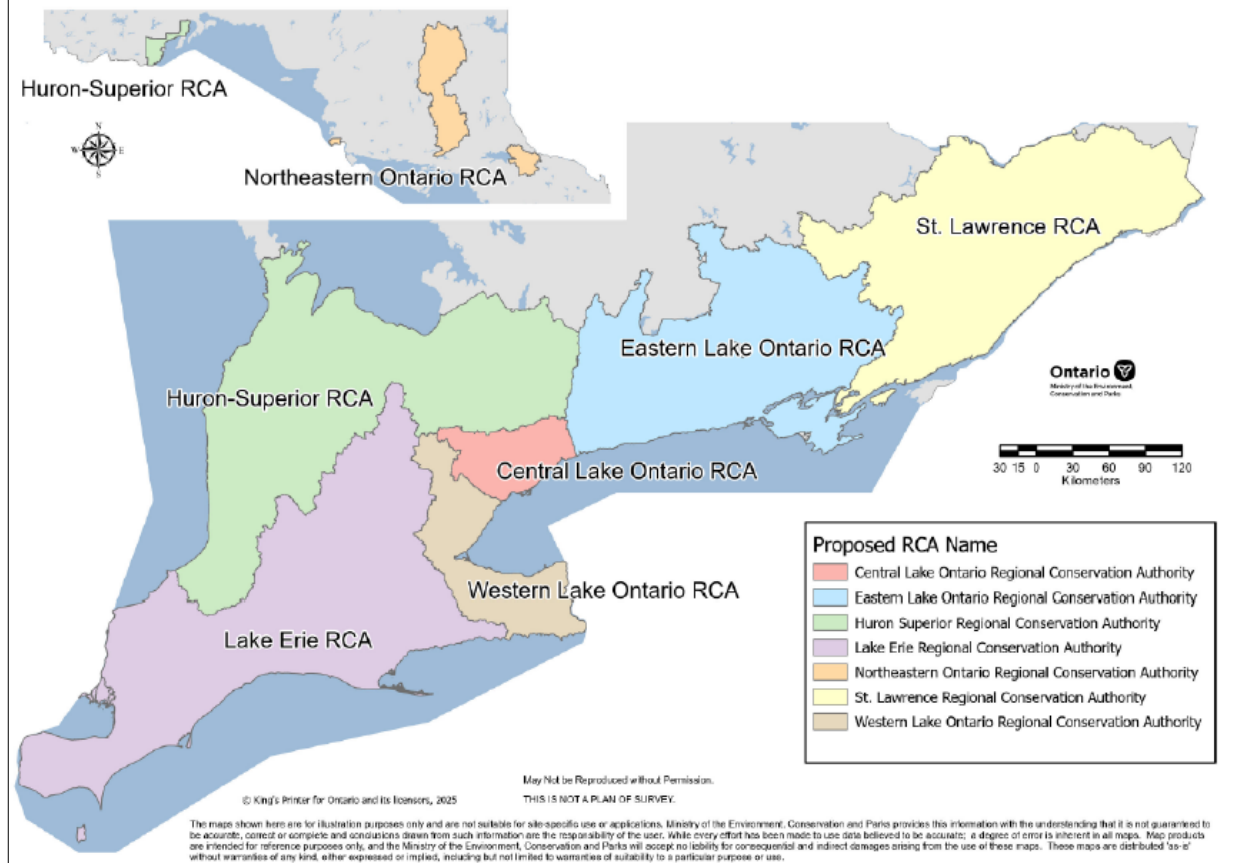
#### Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

On November 7, 2025, the Government of Ontario also posted a proposal on the Environmental Bill of Rights (ERO) titled [Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities](#).

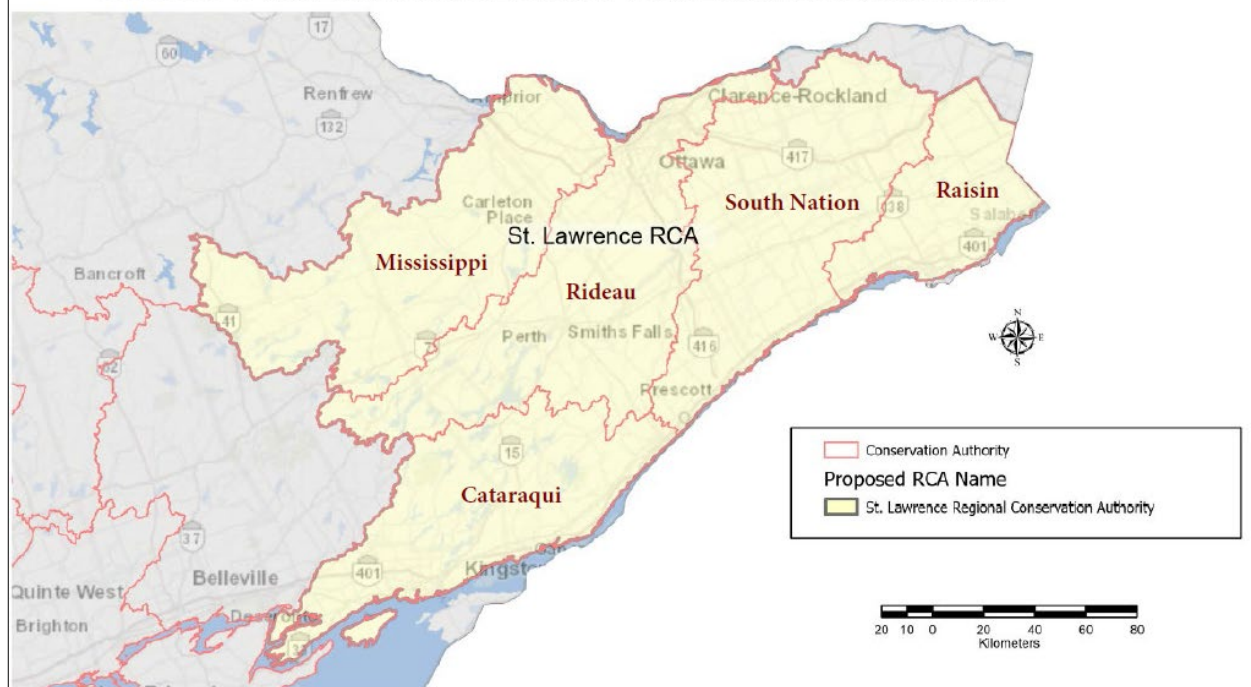
- It proposes to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into 7 regional conservation authorities.
- The RVCA would be consolidated with Mississippi, South Nation, Raisin and Cataraqui to form the St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority.

The proposal is currently posted on the ERO for a 45-day consultation period ending December 22, 2025. For a summary of what is proposed please see **attached table**.

## PROPOSED 7 REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES (RCA)



## PROPOSED ST. LAWRENCE REGIONAL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



## Timeline and Actions to Date

Below is a summary of key milestones regarding the provincial roll out of proposed changes:

October 31 (8 am)	Briefing for CA Chairs and General Managers (Minister McCarthy and MECP)
October 31 (10 am)	Minister Press Briefing
November 6	Bill 68 introduced
November 7	Proposal to consolidate conservation authorities posted
November 18 (10 am)	MECP information session for conservation authorities
November 18 (2 pm)	MECP information session for municipalities
TBD	MECP regional roundtable sessions
By December 10	If Bill 68 passes, formation of the Agency could begin
December 22	Deadline for ERO comments on consolidation proposal
Spring 2026	If proceeding, draft legislation for the consolidation of CAs would be introduced and consulted on
Post municipal election	If proceeding, transition to regional CAs would begin

During this time, the RVCA has undertaken or participated in the following actions:

October 31 (following announcement)	Staff briefing Email notification to Board members Email notification to Municipalities (Mayors & CAOs) Email notification to Foundation members
November 7 (following posting)	Email notification to staff Email notification to Board members Email notification to Source Protection Committee Municipalities were notified directly by MECP RVCA / MVCA municipal information session (Perth)
November 12	Conservation Ontario Council (special session)
November 20 (following Info session)	Staff briefing
October 31 to present	Numerous ongoing discussions amongst: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Ontario and General Managers</li> <li>• Eastern Ontario General Managers</li> <li>• RVCA Chair and General Manager</li> </ul>
November 24	Email update to municipalities
November 27	Board Meeting to receive input and direction
November 28	Update to municipalities (based on Board direction)
December 10	Foundation Meeting

## Analysis

In the tables below, staff provide a brief history of CAs for context and background, summarize the province's reasons for the proposed changes, and provide an analysis of the proposed changes and identify areas of concern based on conversations with CAs and municipalities, as well as Board and council resolutions beginning to circulate.

Table 1: Brief CA History	
Watershed Boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Natural resources in Ontario were in an unhealthy state in the 1930s due to poor land, water and forestry practices, with drought and deforestation causing extensive soil erosion and flooding.</li> <li>It was widely recognized that natural resources could not be protected from contamination, degradation or depletion unless an integrated watershed management approach was adopted using watershed boundaries</li> </ul>
Conservation Authorities Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While the province was responsible for managing natural resources, the scale of erosion and water issues in the 1930s prompted some municipal councils to become involved, which led to the creation of the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i> in 1946</li> <li>Under the Act, municipalities within a shared watershed could vote to ask the province to form a local conservation authority</li> <li>If municipalities chose to form a CA, the legislation required them to operate and govern the organization and to partially fund it in partnership with the province</li> </ul>
Provincial Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The province administered the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i> which enabled CAs to organize and deliver programs and services that furthered the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources</li> <li>Over the years, the province amended the Act to require CAs to manage natural hazards to protect people and property, and more recently, deliver drinking water source protection. These programs are mandated and delivered on behalf of the province.</li> </ul>
Local Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAs also provide other services on behalf of municipalities and deliver programs to address local watershed needs. These programs and services are at the discretion of the Board</li> <li>Municipalities appoint members to the Board of Directors who govern CAs including budgeting, programs, staffing, policies and strategic planning.</li> </ul>
Shared Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial funding was initially the primary source of revenue for CAs, including shared funding for infrastructure projects</li> <li>In the 1990s provincial funding was cut from \$50 million to \$8 million and was limited to natural hazard management.</li> <li>The province allowed CAs to start charging fees, municipalities had to decide which watershed-based programs to keep, and over time municipalities became the primary funder of natural hazard programs as provincial funding remained static.</li> <li>In 2018, provincial natural hazard funding was cut in half, but the province continued to fully fund drinking water source protection</li> <li>In 2023, provincial funding accounted for 5% of CA funding, municipal funding accounted for 54%, and self-generated funding accounted for 37%</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Stated Reasons for Proposed Changes**

The province has listed the following reasons why they are proposing to consolidate CAs and create a new provincial oversight agency:

From ERO Posting

- Patchwork of standards, service delivery: Each CA has different policies, customer service standards, fees, processes and staffing and technical capacity leading to unpredictable and inconsistent turnaround times for approvals across all CAs. This can result in uncertainty and delays for builders, landowners, and farmers seeking permits
- Outdated and fragmented systems: Discrepancies in the tools and technology that CAs use have led to varying types and quality of technology and data management. This can compromise effective provincewide flood risk management and evidence-based decision making
- Administrative duplication: Under the current framework, municipalities are forced to fund duplicate corporate functions, diverting costs away from frontline conservation and service delivery.
- Need for more accountability and transparency: Lack of transparent performance monitoring and reporting, inconsistent customer service standards.

From MECP Information Session

- Ontario is expected to grow by more than six million people in the next 20 years and the challenges we face continue to increase in complexity from climate change, population growth and the pace of development
- Proposed changes are intended to strengthen the capacity, influence and impact of CAs in providing vital watershed management, in safeguarding people and property from flooding, and in being transparent and accountable in the delivery of permitting, programs, and services to Ontario's communities
- With better tools and resources, and central enablement and support, CAs can operate with greater consistency and transparency, and deliver improved services to municipalities and permit applicants aligned with provincial priorities on housing, the economy, and resilient infrastructure.

**Table 3a: Creation of Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency  
Analysis of Proposed Changes and Emerging Areas of Concern**

Creation of Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Questions have been raised about the need to create a provincial agency to oversee CAs as the province can direct any aspect of CAs through legislation, regulations, technical rules, guidance and policies. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Over the years, the province has increased the natural hazard mandate of CAs and added drinking water source protection, and they direct how these programs are administered by CAs through legislation, technical rules, guidelines and reporting.</li> <li>○ More recently, the province enacted changes pertaining to CA budget processes, program categories, levy use, administrative bylaw content, municipal agreements, scope of plan review, website content, approval timelines, reporting, Chair and Vice-Chair term limits, Board membership, and required inventories, plans and strategies.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Between 2020 and 2023, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks also convened a multi-stakeholder working group that had representation from municipalities, CAs, CO, agriculture and developers who worked collaboratively with MECP and MNRF on regulatory amendments to address provincial priorities.</li> </ul>
Funding of Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is expected that the creation and operation of a new provincial Agency would have considerable costs and it is proposed that the Agency could recover costs from CAs which would put pressure on municipal levies.</li> </ul>
Role of Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The province has stated that under the Agency the delivery of local programs and services would continue to be led by CAs and that regional CA Boards would retain full governance responsibilities including approval of budgets for regional CAs</li> <li>• However, the proposed role of the Agency is to oversee CA governance, operations, programs and services; assess and report on CA effectiveness; oversee and evaluate CA financial performance; and guide and evaluate CA strategic planning, with the ability for the Agency's Board of Directors to issue binding directions or recommended guidance to CAs.</li> <li>• The scope of the Agency's oversight is also not limited to natural hazard and source protection programs (which are mandated by the province), it applies to all CA programs and services, including those delivered on behalf of municipalities and those initiated by local Boards to address watershed issues and needs.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While CA Boards may retain governance over CAs, the scope and meaningfulness of their role could be diminished by the provincial oversight and authority of the Agency.</li> <li>• As CAs only exist where municipalities decide to form them, and it is based on the premise that municipalities govern them, any transformative changes to CAs should be undertaken in consultation and partnership with municipalities as the creators, primary funders and governing bodies of CAs.</li> </ul>
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#### Direction

- The province should continue to oversee CAs through the MECP with support from a multi-stakeholder working group to help implement provincial priorities
- If the province creates a new Agency to oversee conservation authorities
  - It should be fully funded by the province with no cost recovery from CAs
  - It should work collaboratively with municipalities, CAs and other key stakeholders to ensure changes are constructive, achieve desired outcomes and do not erode local municipal governance of CAs
  - It should also ensure its Board of Directors includes municipal and CA/CO representation from urban and rural communities as well as from different geographical areas of the province

**Table 3b: Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities  
Analysis of Proposed Changes and Emerging Areas of Concern**

Watershed Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reason CAs are organized along watershed boundaries and not municipal boundaries is to enable them to address natural hazards and resource issues within the drainage basin that is being impacted or causing it.</li> <li>• Each watershed is unique in its hydrology, geology, topography and land use, meaning the issues and challenges it faces are also unique. Managing five watersheds together as one region would be complex because the watersheds are distinct in their characteristics and needs.</li> <li>• Staff also develop specialized knowledge and understanding of their watershed which guides their work whether its flood forecasting and warning, hazard mapping, operating flood control infrastructure, monitoring watershed conditions, or designing restoration and stewardship programs. This critical local knowledge and understanding will need to be preserved if CAs are consolidated to ensure effective program delivery.</li> <li>• The consolidation of CAs would also not result in the complete harmonization of programs and services within regions because needs and priorities will continue to vary from one watershed to the next.</li> </ul>
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Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAs are very responsive and accessible to partners, clients and the public providing a high level of personalized customer service. People can call, email or meet with staff and staff are highly visible in the watershed, meeting people onsite, attending events, presenting to groups and councils or interacting with visitors at our conservation areas.</li> <li>• Since most staff deliver conservation programs and frontline service, they develop relationships with local partners and a deep understanding of local communities, groups and people.</li> <li>• Partners and clients, like municipalities, developers, farmers and lake associations, are also used to having direct access to senior staff, including the General Manager.</li> <li>• Concerns have been raised that if CAs are consolidated, this level of customer service, access to staff and relationship building would not be feasible or sustainable given the geographic size of the proposed region and the number of clients the regional CA would have to serve</li> </ul>
Municipal Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The RVCA has 18 member municipalities, all of whom have at least one seat on its Board of Directors</li> <li>• The proposed St. Lawrence Regional Conservation Authority would have 46 municipalities so not all municipalities could have a seat on the new Board.</li> <li>• Under the current model, seats are allocated based on population which would favour larger urban centres like Ottawa, Kingston and Cornwall while marginalizing the large number of small rural municipalities in Eastern Ontario.</li> <li>• However, despite their size or how seats are allocated on the new Board, each municipality's influence would be diluted within a regional CA</li> <li>• Regional Boards would also not be as attune and responsive to local watershed issues and community concerns.</li> </ul>
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is important that regional CAs remain independent corporations to ensure that all CA assets remain under CA control and ownership including land holdings, buildings and financial reserves. The province did stipulate during their information session that CA ownership of their land would not change and that no CA assets would be transferred to the Agency or province as part of the proposed changes.</li> <li>• Questions have also been raised about how budgets would be developed within regional CAs as the levy capacity of municipalities varies from watershed to watershed. Programs are different between CAs based on the needs and tax base of each local watershed. Larger municipalities would likely not support levy dollars being spent on programs or capital projects outside the watershed they benefit from or are impacted by. Currently Ottawa pays 91% of RVCA's municipal</li> </ul>

	levy but it benefits from all programs and services as it is the downstream receiver in the watershed.
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The province stated that one reason it is proposing consolidation of CAs is to reduce duplicative corporate functions and costs</li> <li>• Many CAs, especially in Eastern Ontario, have very lean corporate services, sometimes relying on the services of member municipalities or a neighbouring CA. This means consolidation may not result in duplication or savings, and a larger organization may even result in higher administrative needs. Most CAs are also very flat organizations with little middle management and working senior managers. This allows the maximum amount of resources to go to frontline service. In a larger organization with numerous office locations, there could be a need for more management or full-time managers who are not also delivering frontline service.</li> <li>• CAs already save on procurement costs by acquiring insurance, benefits, GIS software and some training through CO which results in significant savings each year. Eastern CAs also partner on procurement when possible, to save money on data, training, equipment and other services.</li> <li>• The RVCA also jointly delivers programs with, or on behalf of, neighbouring CAs to save on staffing resources, including tree planting, rural clean water grants, septic permitting and septic reinspection.</li> <li>• Operating a larger regional CA could also result in additional costs as staff would be serving the needs of a larger area and the Board would likely require committees to serve the needs of five watersheds and 46 municipalities.</li> </ul>
Permitting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The province stated that another reason it is proposing to consolidate CAs is permitting, indicating that CAs have different policies, customer service standards, fees, processes and staffing and technical capacity leading to unpredictable and inconsistent turnaround times for approvals</li> <li>• In 2019, CAs voluntarily adopted permit timelines developed by CO and publicly report on their performance annually.</li> <li>• In 2024, the province legislated a permit decision deadline of 90 days, but CAs retained their service standard of 30 days for minor works.</li> <li>• Last year the RVCA approved 99% of complete applications and issued 97% of permits within service standard timelines.</li> <li>• The RVCA, MVCA and SNC have had a consistent fee schedule for planning and permitting for over a decade to ensure equity across municipalities. However, consistent fees across the province would result in higher fees outside the GTA as their fees are higher than other regions.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2024, RVCA also updated its development review policies to be more consistent with SNC and MVCA.</li> <li>• The RVCA also has longstanding reciprocal staff sharing arrangements with MVCA and SNC that are used as needed to ensure no interruption in service and no permit delays.</li> </ul>
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### Direction

- The challenges the province is trying to address through the regional consolidation of CAs can be achieved with 36 CAs:
  - The province could implement a standardized policy, service standards and centralized system to ensure reliable and consistent permitting across all CAs.
  - The province could require staff sharing amongst CAs where it is needed to balance and enhance technical expertise and capacity, improving service and program delivery and ensuring service continuity.
  - The province could lead or support centralized procurement, training, digital strategies, shared services and strategic investments across CAs to reduce administrative duplication and discrepancies in tools, technology and data management.
- If there are still CAs who cannot achieve provincial standards and desired outcomes, then strategic and targeted consolidation of those CAs could be considered.
- If the province decides to proceed with the regional consolidation of all CAs:
  - A cost-benefit analysis should be completed to ensure it will result in sufficient cost savings and to determine the optimal size and boundaries of regional CAs to maximize benefits while minimizing impacts.
  - Transition funding would be required from the province to ensure the cost of consolidation is not born by member municipalities.
  - One region should be consolidated first where the need is greatest, to ensure the model is successful before it is rolled out province wide.

### Attachments:

- Summary of ERO Posting 025-1257 (Consolidation of Conservation Authorities)
- Summary of Bill 68, Schedule 3 (Creation of Provincial Agency)

## Attachment 1: Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities

<b>Summary of ERO Posting 025-1257</b> This posting proposes to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities.			
Stated Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce duplicative administrative costs</li> <li>• Free up resources for front-line service delivery and conservation</li> <li>• Better align CA services with provincial priorities on housing, the economy, infrastructure and climate resilience</li> <li>• Continue to focus on managing natural hazards and watershed health with better tools and more resources for front-line staff</li> <li>• Operate with greater consistency and transparency</li> <li>• Deliver faster services to municipalities and permit applicants while ensuring decisions continue to be based on sound science</li> </ul>		
Consolidation	Below are the seven proposed Regional Conservation Authorities:		
	Name	Consolidated CAs	Number of Municipalities
	Lake Erie	Essex, Lower Thames, St. Clair, Upper Thames, Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Long Point, Grand River	81
	Huron Superior	Ausable, Maitland, Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Nottawasaga, Lake Simcoe, Lakehead	80
	Western Lake Ontario	Niagara, Hamilton, Halton, Credit Valley	28
	Central Lake Ontario	Toronto	17
	Eastern Lake Ontario	Central Lake, Kawartha, Otonabee, Ganaraska, Lower Trent, Crowe, Quinte	48
	St. Lawrence	Cataraqui, Rideau, Mississippi, South Nation, Raisin	46
	Northeastern Ontario	Nickel District, Sault Ste. Marie, Mattagami, North Bay-Mattawa	19
Jurisdiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No changes are proposed to the overall extent of CA jurisdictions</li> </ul>		
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional CAs would remain independent organizations operating with municipal governance and oversight, in accordance with requirements under the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i></li> </ul>		
Mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional CAs would continue to fulfill provincially mandated programs such as drinking water source protection, regulating development and other activities in areas of natural hazards like flooding and erosion (e.g. floodplains, shorelines,</li> </ul>		

	<p>watercourses and wetlands), flood forecasting and warning, and managing lands and recreational trails.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional CAs would continue to provide municipal and other watershed programs and services such as tree planting, data collection, restoration and other integrated watershed management activities that enhance the resilience of local watersheds and educate and engage local communities</li> </ul>
Boundary Criteria	<p>Below are criteria applied for determining the proposed boundaries for regional CAs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining watershed-based jurisdictions – aligning with natural hydrological boundaries to support effective flood and water management, consistent with drinking water Source Protection Areas and Regions.</li> <li>• Relationships between CAs and municipalities – reducing administrative duplication and overlap for municipalities and CAs to simplify accountability and strengthen local partnerships</li> <li>• Balancing expertise and capacity across CAs – enhancing technical skills and resources across CAs to improve service and program delivery</li> <li>• Service continuity – ensuring uninterrupted delivery of local CA programs, including flood forecasting and warning, permitting and drinking water source protection through and after consolidation</li> </ul>
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency would be responsible for overseeing the consolidation of CAs including coordinating the transition process with CA, municipal and stakeholder involvement to ensure minimal disruptions for CAs staff, stakeholders, municipalities and partners including Indigenous communities.</li> <li>• The Agency would provide guidance support throughout the consolidation process such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Develop a structured process and roadmap for consolidation, including common standards and tools</li> <li>○ Provide support/expertise on the organizational aspects of consolidation (governance, HR)</li> <li>○ Provide provincial-level coordination to address system-wide issues that may arise to mitigate risks of delay</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ministry will provide further details on timelines, engagement opportunities and transition supports at a future date.</li> </ul>

## Attachment 2: Creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

<b>Summary of Bill 68, Schedule 3</b> This Bill would amend the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i> to create a new corporation called the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency. This agency would be an agent of the Crown.	
Stated Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create a provincial board-governed agency to provide centralized leadership, efficient governance, strategic direction and oversight of Ontario's conservation authorities.</li> </ul>
Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Board of Directors would manage or supervise the management of the activities and affairs of the Agency</li> <li>The Board would consist of 5 to 12 members</li> <li>Members could be appointed for a term of up to 3 years, but couldn't serve more than 9 years in total</li> <li>Members would be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council who shall take into consideration:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The person's knowledge and experience in public administration, corporate governance and finance</li> <li>The person's knowledge of programs and services provided by CAs</li> <li>Other matters as may be prescribed</li> </ul> </li> <li>The Board would hold at least 4 meetings a year</li> <li>The Board could appoint officers and establish councils, committees and other bodies as it considers appropriate</li> <li>The Board could assign powers and duties to these officers, councils, committees and other bodies or employees of the Agency as they consider appropriate, except the powers and duties prescribed by regulation</li> <li>Board members would be paid remuneration and expenses as determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council</li> </ul>
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Secretary of the Cabinet would appoint the first CEO to be employed by the Agency</li> <li>The Agency would appoint subsequent CEOs</li> <li>The CEO would be responsible for the management and administration of the affairs of the Agency subject to supervision and direction of the Board of Directors</li> <li>The CEO may appoint employees, arrange for facilities and equipment and obtain expert and technical services</li> <li>The Agency would pay remuneration and benefits to the CEO as determined by the Board</li> </ul>

Agency	<p>The objects of the Agency are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the governance of CAs and other aspects of CAs such as their operations, including the programs and services they provide to further the purposes of the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i></li> <li>• Oversee the transition to a regional watershed-based framework for CAs (proposing to consolidate 36 CAs into seven regional CAs)</li> <li>• Promote consistent policies, standards and fees for programs and services provided by CAs</li> <li>• Assess and report on the effectiveness of CAs in furthering the purposes of the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i>, including outcomes related to the implementation of their programs and services</li> <li>• Oversee and evaluate the financial performance of CAs to ensure long-term operational and capital financial sustainability, including the financial sustainability of mandatory programs and services they deliver on behalf of the province</li> <li>• Guide and evaluate the strategic planning by CAs to ensure it aligns with provincial objectives</li> <li>• Support the development and implementation of a standardized and centralized system for processing permit applications issued by CAs</li> <li>• Lead the development and implementation of digital strategies and shared services to support the operations of CAs, including programs and services</li> <li>• Support strategic investment in programs and services provided by CAs, including leveraging funding available to Ontario and CAs</li> <li>• Advise the provincial government in respect of the programs and services CAs provide and matters related to the objects of the Agency</li> </ul> <p>The Agency may issue directions to one or more CAs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directions could govern the operations of CAs, including the programs and services they provide</li> <li>• A direction could address key performance indicators, key results or service delivery targets, service standards, information technology, procurement, training of members and employees, budgeting, asset management plans, strategic planning</li> <li>• CAs must comply with every direction of the Agency</li> <li>• A direction of the Agency may be general or particular in its application</li> <li>• The Agency must publish every direction it issues on a website</li> <li>• The Agency must provide the Minister with a copy of a proposed direction 45 days in advance of issuing it. During this period, the Minister may direct the Agency to take action in relation to the proposed direction and report to the Minister on how the Agency complied</li> </ul> <p>Other</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency could issue guidelines to CAs for the same matters for which directions could be issued (see list above) or for the purpose of supporting the implementation of any directions</li> <li>• The Agency must publish every guideline it issues on a website</li> <li>• The Agency could require a CA to provide information to the Agency, including information relating to its operations, employees, assets, liabilities, rights and obligations, which may include plans, reports, and financial statements</li> <li>• The Agency could require a CA to publish all or a portion of the information provided in a manner specified by the Agency</li> <li>• The Agency must provide a report to the Minister every 3 years regarding its activities and effectiveness in achieving its objects during the previous 3 years, its planned activities to achieve its objects during the subsequent 3 years, and its strategic priorities for the longer term</li> </ul>
Minister (MECP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister and the Agency must enter into a MOU which must set out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The requirements relating to the governance of the Agency and the expectations between the MECP and Agency regarding the Agency's operations</li> <li>○ The accountability relationships between the Minister and the Agency and the roles and responsibilities for MECP and Agency personnel, the Chair, Vice-Chairs and Board</li> <li>○ The requirements with which the Agency shall comply in connection with carrying out its objects</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Minister could issue a direction to the Agency if they consider it to be in the public interest to do so</li> <li>• The Agency must comply with every direction of the Minister</li> <li>• A direction of the Minister may be general or particular in its application and may relate to the Agency's exercise of its powers and duties under the <i>Conservation Authorities Act</i> or any other Act</li> <li>• The Agency must publish every direction by the Minister on a website</li> <li>• The Minister could require the Agency to provide information to the Minister at a time and in the manner specified by the Minister including information relating to the Agency's operations, employees, assets, liabilities, rights and obligations, which may include plans, reports, and financial statements</li> <li>• The Minister could audit any aspect of the operations of the Agency at any time</li> </ul>
Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Minister could provide funding to the Agency</li> <li>• For the purpose of recovering costs and expenses, the Agency could apportion amounts to be paid by the CAs</li> <li>• The Agency could charge fees for any matter related to the performance of its duties and the exercise of its powers</li> <li>• The Agency could require that fees be paid to another person under circumstances prescribed by legislation</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Agency would appoint auditors and prepare annual financial statements</li> </ul>
Auditor General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Auditor General could audit any aspect of the operations of the Agency at any time</li> </ul>
Dissolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the Minister considers it to be in the public interest to wind up the affairs of the Agency, the Minister could do all things necessary to accomplish that, including liquidating or selling its assets and pay proceeds to the provincial Consolidated Revenue Fund, transfer its assets and liabilities to the Crown, or transfer its employees to the Crown or another agency of the Crown.</li> <li>• When winding up of the Agency is complete, the Lieutenant Governor in Council could dissolve the Agency</li> </ul>



United Counties of  
**Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry**

**RESOLUTION**

**MOVED BY** Councillor Densham

**RESOLUTION NO 2025- 159**

**SECONDED BY**

**DATE** November 17, 2025

WHEREAS the Conservation Authorities Act (1946) enables municipalities to establish local conservation authorities, and when municipalities choose to form such authorities, they assume responsibility for governance and funding through the appointment of a Board of Directors and the provision of an annual levy to cover expenses;

AND WHEREAS the municipalities within Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) established South Nation Conservation (SNC) in 1947 and the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA) in 1963;

AND WHEREAS local municipalities currently provide between 25% and 50% of total conservation authority funding, while the Province of Ontario provides approximately 3%;

AND WHEREAS municipalities have governed their respective conservation authorities for decades, tailoring programs and services to local watershed needs, maintaining accountable service standards, and ensuring fair and predictable costs for ratepayers;

AND WHEREAS conservation authorities collectively own and manage thousands of acres of land, much of which was donated by local residents and entrusted to conservation authorities as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by locally governed conservation authorities;

AND WHEREAS Bill 68 (Schedule 3) proposes the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, a Crown corporation that would assume governance responsibilities and consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional authorities, with municipal cost apportionment yet to be defined;

AND WHEREAS the Province already possesses the authority to establish overarching legislation, regulations, and standards through the Conservation Authorities Act and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry calls on the Government of Ontario to maintain local, independent, municipally governed, watershed-based conservation authorities to ensure strong local

representation in decisions related to municipal levies, community-focused service delivery, and the protection and management of conservation lands;

AND FURTHER THAT while the United Counties of SDG supports provincial goals for consistent permit approval processes, shared services, and digital modernization, imposing a new top-down agency structure without strong local accountability and governance risks creating unnecessary cost, red tape, and bureaucracy, thereby undermining efficiency and responsiveness to local community needs;


AND FURTHER THAT the United Counties of SDG supports efforts to balance expertise, capacity, and program delivery across the province, and requests that the Province work collaboratively with municipalities and local conservation authorities to determine the most effective level of strategic consolidation to achieve both provincial and local objectives.

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be sent to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks, to the local MP and MPPs, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, and all municipalities and Conservation Authorities in Ontario.

☒ CARRIED

☐ DEFEATED

☐ DEFERRED

  
WARDEN

Recorded Vote:

Councillor Bergeron	_____
Councillor Broad	_____
Councillor Densham	_____
Councillor Fraser	_____
Councillor Guindon	_____
Councillor Landry	_____
Councillor MacDonald	_____
Councillor McDonald	_____
Councillor McGillis	_____
Councillor St. Pierre	_____
Councillor Williams	_____
Warden Lang	_____