

MHSTCI Statement of Environmental Values

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ontario *Environmental Bill of Rights* (EBR) was proclaimed in February 1994. The founding principles of the *EBR* are stated in its Preamble:

- The people of Ontario recognize the inherent value of the natural environment.
- The people of Ontario have a right to a healthful environment.
- The people of Ontario have as a common goal the protection, conservation and restoration of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

While the government has the primary responsibility for achieving this goal, Ontarians should have the means to ensure that it is achieved in an effective, timely, open and fair manner.

The purposes of the Act are:

- To protect, conserve and where reasonable, restore the integrity of the environment;
- To provide sustainability of the environment by the means provided in the Act; and
- To protect the right to a healthful environment by the means provided in the Act.

These purposes include the following:

- The prevention, reduction and elimination of the use, generation and release of pollutants that are an unreasonable threat to the integrity of the environment.
- The protection and conservation of biological, ecological and genetic diversity.
- The protection and conservation of natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.
- The encouragement of the wise management of our natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.
- The identification, protection and conservation of ecologically sensitive areas or processes.

To assist in fulfilling these purposes, the Act provides:

- the means by which Ontarians may participate in the making of environmentally significant decisions by the Government of Ontario;
- increased accountability of the Government of Ontario for its environmental decision-making;
- increased access to the courts by residents of Ontario for the protection of the environment; and
- enhanced protection for employees who take action in respect of environmental harm.

The *EBR* requires a Statement of Environmental Values (SEV) from all designated ministries. The designated ministries are [listed here](#).

Statements of Environmental Values (SEV) are a means for designated government ministries to record their commitment to the environment and be accountable for ensuring consideration of the environment in their decisions. A SEV explains:

- how the purposes of the EBR will be applied when decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the Ministry; and
- how consideration of the purposes of the EBR will be integrated with other considerations, including social, economic and scientific considerations that are part of decision-making in the Ministry.

It is each Minister's responsibility to take every reasonable step to ensure that the SEV is considered whenever decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the ministry.

The ministry will examine the SEV on a periodic basis to ensure the Statements are current.

2. MINISTRY VISION, MANDATE AND BUSINESS

The Ministry provides leadership and support for heritage, tourism, culture, and sport and recreation sectors which are fundamental to the prosperity and quality of life of Ontario citizens.

The Ministry works with the tourism industry to stimulate economic growth, investment and competitiveness in the rapidly changing world of travel and leisure.

Through leadership within the arts and culture sector, the Ministry helps grow the creative economy, and build dynamic, livable communities with vibrant cultural activities.

The Ministry promotes the conservation and wise stewardship of non-renewable and irreplaceable cultural heritage resources, which play an important role in the economic and social development of Ontario communities. Cultural heritage contributes to sense of place, community identity, and has educational and tourism benefits.

The Ministry helps broaden participation in sport and recreation to enable Ontarians to lead healthy, active lifestyles and enhances opportunities for athletes to achieve success. Hosting high-profile sport events increases job creation and encourages economic growth.

Specific details on the responsibilities of the Ministry can be found on the [Ministry website](#).

3. APPLICATION OF THE SEV

The Ministry is committed to applying the purposes of the *EBR* when decisions that might significantly affect the environment need to be made in the ministry, and as it develops Acts, regulations and policies.

4. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Ministry will integrate the purposes of the *EBR* with other considerations including social, economic and scientific considerations when making decisions that might significantly affect the natural environment. The *EBR* purposes of conserving, protecting and, where feasible restoring the natural environment, providing for the sustainability of the natural environment and protecting the public's right to a healthful environment will be objectives of the Ministry when making decisions that might significantly affect the natural environment as well as other considerations. The Ministry will encourage energy and resource conservation in those sectors where it provides policy direction or programs.

The natural environment is fundamental to the ministry's key sectors – heritage, sport, tourism and culture. The Ministry will promote the value of the natural and outdoor environment and actively protect, support and promote its sustainability to stakeholders, as well as other ministries and governments. Sustainable development and an adequate supply of recreational facilities, parkland, open space and trails for current and future populations is critical to the long-term health of communities, regions and the province.

Conservation of cultural heritage resources contributes to the protection of the natural environment. Reuse of older buildings helps protect greenfield land, conserves non-renewable resources, requires less energy for the creation of new products and services, reduces waste going to landfill, and reduces the generation and release of pollutants. The Ministry will promote the conservation of Ontario's rich cultural heritage resources to support environmental sustainability and healthy, vibrant communities.

An important facet of Ontario's appeal has always been its vast outdoor spaces which provide opportunities to fish, hunt, canoe, hike and camp. Ontario has an abundance of natural beauty that attracts tourists and outdoor enthusiasts to experience the province's natural features, forests, waterways and wildlife. The Ministry will promote the value of outdoor experiences, parkland and open spaces, and will encourage sustainable eco-tourism and recreation activities.

5. MONITORING USE OF THE SEV

The Ministry will document how the SEV was considered each time a decision is posted on the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry. The Ministry will ensure that staff involved in decisions that might significantly affect the environment, are aware of the Ministry's Environmental Bill of Rights obligations.

6. CONSULTATION

The Ministry believes in being accountable for its environmental decision-making. The Ministry believes that consultation is vital to sound environmental decision-making. The Ministry will provide opportunities for an open and consultative process when making environmentally significant decisions.

7. CONSIDERATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The Ministry recognizes the value that Indigenous peoples place on the environment. When making decisions that might significantly affect the environment, the Ministry will provide opportunities for involvement of Indigenous peoples whose interests may be affected by such decisions so that Indigenous interests can be appropriately considered. This commitment is not intended to alter or detract from any constitutional obligation the Province may have to consult with Indigenous peoples.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE

The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries believes that the public interest requires a broad effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to build a cleaner and more resilient province. The Ministry will continue to involve and engage individuals, businesses, communities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and First Nation and Métis communities in the ultimate goal of fostering a high-productivity, resilient, low-carbon economy and society in Ontario.

The Ministry will also work with partner ministries such as the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to consider climate change mitigation and adaptation.

9. GREENING OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS

The Ministry believes in the wise use and conservation of natural resources. The Ministry will support Government of Ontario initiatives to conserve energy and water, and to wisely use our air and land resources in order to generate environmental, health and economic benefits for present and future generations.

The Ministry recognizes the important role of energy conservation in its responsibility for stewardship and management of the environment. The Ministry will undertake activities to promote energy conservation in its operations. These include:

- Encouraging its landlords to promote energy conservation;
- Finding ways to conserve energy in its internal operations.