



Municipalité de  
**RUSSELL**  
Township



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 21, 2019

The Honourable John Yakabuski  
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry  
84 Isabella Street, Unit 6  
Pembroke, Ontario  
K8A 5S5

**Re: Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting Number 013-4992**

**Subject: In response to the April 5<sup>th</sup>, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's posting number 013-4992 on the Environmental Registry of Ontario; 'Focusing conservation authority development permits on the protection of people and property'.**

Dear Minister Yakabuski,

The Township of Russell has a strong history of close collaboration with South Nation Conservation (SNC) on shared priorities, which protect the environment and engage communities while balancing people and nature.

SNC has a streamlined, convenient and pragmatic approach to local regulation and permit approvals that adhere to their environmental mandate of protecting people and property from natural hazards; including:

- Delivering municipal watershed planning reviews on behalf of member municipalities to determine if development is susceptible to natural hazards.
- Offering pre-consultation meetings to review development proposals with residents, municipal staff and developers, leading to more efficient approvals.
- Delivering cost-effective municipal programs through memorandum of understanding agreements, including issuing permits and performing inspections for septic installation and maintenance on behalf of 13 participating municipalities under Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code.
- Preparing floodplain maps and updating regulated areas for municipalities to guide official plans and zoning by-laws, and guide future development away from flood and erosion-prone areas; SNC holds public open houses and communicates directly with residents to inform updated mapping.

Conservation Authorities are one of the only boots-on-the-ground agencies working directly with municipalities, residents, and stakeholders in a timely and meaningful way; with international recognition for their approach to integrated watershed management.

Strengths in the Conservation Authority service delivery model include:

- The ability to streamline approvals from several agencies and work directly with applicants through site visits and pre-consultations.
- Local knowledge and expertise as assets to communities and the environment.
- An effective and efficient approach to reduce red tape for development.

The Township of Russell supports the Province's effort to:

- Consolidate regulations to ensure consistency throughout the Province, while still allowing local flexibility based on differences in risks posed by natural hazards.
- Allow exemptions for low-risk development activities from requiring permits, provided in accordance with local policies.

Partnerships with SNC have enabled our resilient communities to grow safely and sustainably and have allowed us to come together on shared environmental priorities.

We encourage the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to consider the value in existing approaches by Conservation Authorities which work closely with municipalities to deliver local permit approvals for development to protect people and property.

Sincerely,



Pierre Leroux  
Mayor

PL/mr