

May 10, 2019

Environmental Registry of Ontario
ERO Number: 013-5018

To Whom it May Concern:

Re: Modernizing conservation authority operations – Conservation Authorities Act

The Ontario Alliance of Climbers (OAC) is concerned about the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act under Environmental Registry of Ontario posting ERO #013-5018, as further defined by Bill 108. Specifically, we are concerned about the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act restricting the ability of conservation authorities to levy municipalities only for the identified “core” mandated programs of natural hazard management, management of conservation authority-owned lands, and source water protection.

We believe that this will impact the ability of the watershed-based Board of Directors to set programs on a watershed-scale, and may have the effect of reducing funding to conservation authorities and thus the conservation authorities’ ability to carry out vital watershed health and education programs such as: environmental education and day-camps; water quality sampling, recreational dam management; environmental stewardship; tree planting; natural heritage monitoring; and program partnering.

Our concerns are further compounded by recently announced budget cuts to flood related transfer payments, the 50-million tree program, the South Georgian Bay Coastal Initiative, and valuable summer job programs.

The Ontario Alliance of Climbers (OAC) values the existing programs and services provided by Ontario’s conservation authorities. We understand that conservation authorities already operate on limited budgets and that further reductions to funding will adversely affect the valuable programs and services that they provide. Further, this Act was updated in 2017 after more than two-years of public input.

We respectfully implore the Government of the Province of Ontario to change the proposed legislation to continue to allow conservation authorities to design programs on a watershed-scale with the approval of their municipally appointed Board of Directors.

Thank you,

Tony Berlier on behalf of the OAC
Co-Chair
Ontario Alliance of Climbers (OAC)
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Cc: Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
MPP Bill Walker
City of Toronto – Parkdale / High Park
MPP Bhutla Karpoche