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Introduction

The recent passage of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 marks a new era of accessibility in Ontario. This legislation will make Ontario one of the world leaders in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

While the government is moving forward to implement the new legislation, there will be a transition period during which government and parts of the broader public sector will continue to have planning and other obligations under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001 (ODA). These obligations will remain in effect until they are repealed and replaced by standards under the new act.

Under the ODA, Ontario government ministries, municipalities, hospitals, school boards, colleges, universities and public transportation organizations are required to develop annual accessibility plans to make policies, practices, programs, services and buildings more accessible to people with disabilities. These plans must be made available to the public. Accessibility planning efforts to date have developed a strong foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will ensure real and effective change.

This document is the third annual accessibility plan developed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the first to include the Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs. It highlights achievements of the 2004-05 plan and outlines commitments for 2005-06 so that no new barriers are created and, over time, existing ones are removed.

The ministry and the secretariat intend to build on their achievements by implementing initiatives that support the government's efforts and commitment to continue to make Ontario an inclusive and accessible province, where people of all abilities have a chance to fully participate and achieve their potential.

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Minister's Message



Hon. David Ramsay

The McGuinty government marked a new era in accessibility with the passage of the landmark Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005. This legislation establishes our province as a world leader in improving accessibility for people with disabilities.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs strongly support the government's goal to identify, remove and prevent barriers, and improve accessibility. As part of our commitment to this larger goal, we are continuing to increase and improve access to the province's natural resources for Ontario residents and visitors.

For example, the ministry is working with partners and stakeholders to construct boardwalks, viewing platforms and other structures on Crown land that allow people with disabilities to enjoy nature firsthand and to take part in outdoor activities such as fishing or birdwatching. The ministry has developed barrier-free guidelines for provincial parks and virtually all parks offer barrier-free facilities and accessible campsites in campgrounds. Special provision has been made for people with disabilities to participate in some of the wildlife hunts held each year. In addition, our web sites and publications include a range of formats that can be easily accessed by people with disabilities.

We will continue to build on past progress and accomplishments as we lay the foundation for the development of accessibility standards that will lead to even greater and more effective change. We will ensure that the ministry's and secretariat's legislation, policies and programs are designed to eliminate barriers to people with disabilities. The achievements highlighted in this year's plan, as well as the improvements we will be implementing in the coming year, demonstrate the strength and scope of our commitment.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs will continue to make every effort to ensure that

Ontarians of all abilities have equitable access to information on natural resources, to outdoor experiences in provincial parks and on Crown land, and to job opportunities in the ministry and secretariat.



Honourable David Ramsay
Minister of Natural Resources
Minister Responsible for Aboriginal Affairs

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The Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs (OSAA) 2004-05 achievements are reported in the Ministry of the Attorney General 2005-06 accessibility plan.

During 2004-05, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has implemented a number of measures to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. The focus in 2004-05 has been on meeting legislated requirements for accessibility under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act (ODA), raising awareness within the ministry on accessibility issues and opportunities and taking initial action on a number of commitments outlined in the ministry's Accessibility Plan for 2004-06). Steps include the following:

Legislative Requirements

Section 4 - Built Environment

Commitment: *The ministry will develop an implementation plan for reviewing facilities and identifying improvements to*

meet government-wide accessibility guidelines when released. MNR will also continue to ensure that facilities meet the current requirements of the Ontario Building Code regarding accessibility.

Action and Timeframe: Implementation plan to be completed in 2004-05

Status: Standards for barrier-free design of Ontario Government facilities were released in October 2004 and have been communicated widely within ministries. Provisions are mandatory for buildings, structures and premises that the government leases, purchases, constructs or significantly renovates following the coming into force of Section 4 of the ODA. The ministry is meeting these standards and will have regard for them in less significant renovations or improvements. In light of these provisions, an implementation plan to review facilities existing prior to Section 4 coming into effect is not required.

Rationale: Since the barrier-free standards apply to facilities acquired, constructed, leased or substantially renovated since Section 4 of the ODA has come into force, an implementation plan to review compliance for facilities previously acquired, constructed or leased prior to Section 4 coming into effect is not required.

Commitment: *New operating proposals to be included in program business plans and in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2005-06 will be reviewed from the standpoint of accessibility issues and measures to ensure prevention of barriers.*

Action and Timeframe: Reviews will be carried out during the 2005-06 Results Based Planning process (by March 2005) and will include Section 4 (accessibility to government buildings and premises) and Section 5 (accessibility in procurement of goods and services).

Status: This commitment has been met. New operating proposals included in program business plans and in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2005-06 have been reviewed with respect to accessibility provisions and to ensure conformity with existing legislation.

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Section 5 - Procurement of goods and services

Commitment: *MNR will ensure managers and supervisors are given guidance on having regard for accessibility in procurement of goods and services. The ministry will incorporate the government-wide guidelines for accessibility in procurement into its procurement processes.*

Action and Timeframe: MBS guidelines will be communicated in 2004-05 to relevant staff and incorporated in the ministry's procurement procedures.

Status: This commitment has been met. Relevant staff have received the new guidelines for accessibility in procurement and the ministry is incorporating these into its procurement processes.

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Section 6 - Government Internet sites

Commitment: *The ministry will continue to ensure that Internet sites are accessible, including the testing of all new site content.*

Action and Timeframe: The ministry web site is currently under redesign - ODA requirements are a key part of the redesign. The current web site has been updated to reflect ODA requirements on all key pages - some Adobe Acrobat file attachments are still being brought up to standard. Internet site redesign and conversion of remaining Adobe Acrobat file attachments to be completed by March 2005.

Status: Accessibility commitment has been met. However, redesign of the ministry's web site has not been completed pending decisions on content and management. Web site redesign and implementation of improvements will meet ODA accessibility requirements. The ministry continues to monitor all sites and materials for compliance with ODA accessibility requirements.

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Section 7 - Government publications

Commitment: *The ministry will continue to follow existing guidelines and procedures for meeting accessible format requests through Publications Ontario.*

Action and Timeframe: MNR will continue to work cooperatively with Publications Ontario to provide publications in an ODA compliant format in 2004-05. All ministry staff will be provided with ongoing guidance on procedures for responding to requests for publications in accessible formats.

Status: This commitment has been met. MNR has worked with Publications Ontario to provide publications in an ODA compliant format and ministry staff have been familiarized with procedures for responding to requests for publications in accessible formats.

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Section 8 - Government employee accommodation

Commitment: *MNR will continue to identify employee accommodation needs and access the Employment Accommodation Fund to accommodate staff with disabilities.*

Action and Timeframe: Ministry procedures incorporating these actions regarding staff with disabilities will be followed in 2004-05.

Status: This commitment has been met. In 2004-05 MNR has continued to identify employee accommodation needs and accessed the Employment Accommodation Fund to make provision for staff with disabilities.

Rationale: Commitment has been met.

Commitment: *The ministry will ensure that all existing and new managers and supervisors complete training on accommodating the accessibility needs of employees and job applicants with disabilities.*

Action and Timeframe: Take follow-up action to ensure training of all qualifying managers, supervisors by March 2005. Ongoing action will be taken as new managers and supervisors are appointed.

Status: In progress. Ongoing efforts are being made to ensure accessibility training of managers and supervisors.

Rationale: Continuing attention is required to ensure training for employee and job applicant accessibility needs.

Commitment: *When the current manager training program on accommodating accessibility needs is extended to other relevant supervisory staff, MNR will ensure that these staff receive training on employment accommodation for employees with disabilities.*

Action and Timeframe: Action will be taken upon extension of the government-wide program.

Status: Since the government-wide training program has not been extended to other relevant supervisory staff, no action can be taken at this time.

Rationale: Training program has restricted access and cannot be accessed by other relevant staff until a government decision to extend the program has been made.

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Section 9 - Government funded capital programs

Commitment: *Capital funding proposals in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2005-06 and 2006-07 will be reviewed for compliance with requirements under Section 9 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Conformity with requirements of the Ontario Building Code on provision of access will be an important focus. Where insufficient provisions are found, further follow-up has been undertaken to ensure projects meet these requirements.*

Action and Timeframe: Review proposals for compliance with accessibility requirements during Results-Based Planning for 2005-06 by March 2005.

Status: This commitment has been met. Review of capital funding proposals for compliance with accessibility requirements has been carried out during Results Based Planning for 2005-06.

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Acts and Regulations

Commitment: *MNR will work cooperatively with other ministries in assessing current provisions for people with disabilities for fees, permits and services*

Action and Timeframe: MNR will initiate discussions with other relevant ministries, to be completed by March 2005, and will respond to needs for refinements, improvements in accessibility provisions.

Status: In progress. Initial discussions have not yet been completed.

Rationale: Further work has been required to prepare for discussions with other ministries.

Commitment: *In undertaking reviews of legislation and in implementing changes to legislation, MNR will include attention to how the legislation addresses accessibility issues and will ensure that accessibility requirements and guidelines are met as legislative changes are made.*

Action and Timeframe: Specific reviews of legislation will include assessment of how the legislation addresses accessibility requirements and guidelines and implementation of appropriate provisions.

Status: Ongoing. Efforts are being made to include accessibility considerations in legislative reviews being undertaken.

Rationale: This commitment is a continuing responsibility as assessment of legislation is undertaken.

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Policies

Commitment: *Guidance will be provided to staff undertaking policy and program development on how to identify needs and include accessibility provisions in policy and program proposals.*

Action and Timeframe: Develop guidelines for incorporating accessibility considerations in policy and program development by March 2005.

Status: Guidelines are in development.

Rationale: Development of guidelines has taken longer than anticipated.

Commitment: *MNR will build on the results of the Employment Systems Review to advance the ministry's diversity objectives by examining employment systems processes, tools and documents. Accessibility issues will be an area of focus for this assessment.*

Action and Timeframe: Review to be undertaken during the 2004-06 planning period and specific initiatives will be recommended for implementation.

Status: Review of employment systems processes, tools and documents has not yet been undertaken pending establishment and implementation of changes in human resource services / delivery underway for the Ontario Public Service.

Rationale: Review to be undertaken once revised service and delivery provisions are established.

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Programs and Services

Commitment: *MNR will review government-wide facility accessibility guidelines upon their release to determine the need for inventory / assessment of accessibility provisions for provincial park buildings, facilities and sites.*

Action and Timeframe: Review guidelines by March 2005 to determine inventory requirements

Status: This commitment has been met. Standards for barrier-free design of Ontario Government facilities were released in October 2004. Provisions are mandatory for buildings, structures and premises that the Government leases, purchases, constructs or significantly renovates following the coming into force of Section 4 of the ODA. The ministry is meeting these standards and will have regard for them in less significant renovations or improvements. Since these standards apply to facilities acquired, constructed or substantially renovated following Section 4 of the ODA coming into force, an immediate inventory of accessibility provisions for existing provincial park buildings, facilities and sites is not essential to meet standards.

Rationale: The review determined that an immediate inventory to determine compliance with the barrier-free standards was not required. Ongoing assessment of provincial park facilities and sites will be carried out.

Commitment: *Results of the accommodation program evaluation which assessed MNR's buildings and facilities will be used to develop management strategies for each of the ministry's accommodation portfolios, including addressing of accessibility issues.*

Action and Timeframe: Development of management strategies for ministry buildings and facilities to commence in 2004-05.

Status: This commitment has been met. Accessibility has been included in assessment of MNR buildings and facilities and is being included in the work currently underway to develop management strategies for the ministry's accommodation portfolios.

Commitment: *The ministry will continue the work of its accessibility working group to provide ongoing coordination for its accessibility planning and improvements. Increased emphasis will be placed on coordinating the implementation of accessibility provisions.*

Action and Timeframe: Coordination of accessibility planning and improvements for 2004-05 planning period.

Status: This commitment has been met. Accessibility planning and coordination of implementation has been carried out for 2004-05 planning period.

Commitment: *Provision will be made in program evaluations undertaken for MNR programs to assess provision of access for people with disabilities as an integral part of the program evaluation.*

Action and Timeframe: Guidelines and implementation planning to be completed during 2004-06 planning period. Initial program reviews incorporating accessibility considerations to be undertaken.

Status: Action on this commitment is ongoing. Completion of guidelines and implementation planning is targeted for 2005-06.

Rationale: This commitment was made for the two-year planning period 2004-06 and will be met by the end of 2005-06.

Commitment: *Procedures for addressing accessibility will be incorporated in program planning and business planning templates and guidelines. Attention will be paid to a range of accessibility needs including attitude change.*

Action and Timeframe: Development of procedures and incorporation in program planning and corporate planning templates, guidelines by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing.

Rationale: Development of guidelines and implementation plan has taken longer than anticipated.

Commitment: *MNR will continue to include accessibility as an item in periodic client satisfaction surveys.*

Action and Timeframe: Include accessibility in periodic client satisfaction surveys on an ongoing basis.

Status: This commitment has been met.

Commitment: *MNR will establish a general inquiry TTY number and further review its 1-800 telephone service to identify priorities for providing TTY access for persons with disabilities.*

Action and Timeframe: Implement general inquiry TTY number by Fall 2004, review needs by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing. General inquiry TTY number has not yet been established. Further action is to be undertaken in 2005-06.

Rationale: TTY implementation to be undertaken in fall 2005.

Commitment: *The ministry will develop an implementation plan for incorporating specific provisions for customer services to people with disabilities and including these provisions in updated customer service procedures.*

Action and Timeframe: Identify specific provisions for customer services to people with disabilities, develop implementation plan by March 2005, and include in customer service procedures. Attention will be paid to a range of measures, including better understanding of needs and improved attitudes toward people with disabilities.

Status: Ongoing. Work on implementation plan to be completed in 2005-06 and further actions commenced.

Rationale: A number of issues had to be addressed prior to completing implementation plan, including accessibility training for customer service staff. This delayed completion of the implementation plan.

Commitment: *The ministry will participate in identifying its partner agencies having responsibilities for improving accessibility under the Ontarians with Disabilities Act and will work cooperatively with these agencies in implementing accessibility provisions.*

Action and Timeframe: Finalize agencies with responsibilities for accessibility under the ODA by March 2005.

Status: Government decisions have not been made regarding agencies to be included as having responsibilities for accessibility under the ODA. Accordingly it was not possible to identify these agencies by March 2005.

Rationale: Pending government decision making, finalizing of agency responsibilities for accessibility under the ODA was not possible.

Commitment: *Through electronic service delivery initiatives, the ministry has improved and will continue to improve access for people with disabilities, as well as others, to a variety of direct services including permit issuing, other purchasing, information provision, and query responses. Electronic service options exist for provincial parks and other popular ministry services.*

Action and Timeframe: Improvements to electronic service delivery on an ongoing basis in accordance with government-wide priorities, initiatives and resource availability.

Status: Commitment has been met. Ongoing work is proceeding on electronic service delivery improvements.

Commitment: *In ministry office and public use facilities where MNR is considered to have the lead for operating, the ministry will have plans in place to assist with the evacuation of staff and visitors with disabilities and will ensure that the plans are incorporated in the Emergency Procedures handbook distributed to all staff. MNR will work with property management to incorporate provisions for people with disabilities within the parameters established for these provisions.*

Action and Timeframe: Ensure needs of people with disabilities continue to be provided for within the parameters established on an ongoing basis, as new evacuation plans are developed or existing plans / procedures are reviewed, updated.

Status: This commitment has been met. The ministry is continuing to ensure needs of persons with disabilities are provided for as new evacuation plans are developed or existing plans updated.

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Practices

Commitment: *Communicate to ministry staff the provisions of the ODA, available guidelines and best practices for*

accommodating needs of people with disabilities.

Action and Timeframe: Complete communications strategy by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing. Staff communications strategy has not yet been completed.

Rationale: Strategy continues to be developed.

Commitment: *MNR will provide opportunities for input from staff in identifying accessibility barriers and will include this input in planning for improvements.*

Action and Timeframe: The ministry will develop and implement an accessibility communications strategy to include provisions for input from staff by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing. Staff communications strategy has not yet been completed.

Rationale: Workload priorities did not permit completion of project to develop a communications strategy by March 2005.

Commitment: *Accessibility audits will be initiated in several representative MNR sites and program areas to assess accessibility provisions and needs, and identify priorities for addressing needs. These audits will help establish measures and approaches to be adopted in the ministry and will also help raise awareness of staff and program managers regarding accessibility needs.*

Action and Timeframe: Pilot audits for representative sites will be planned by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing. Planning for pilot audits is commencing and efforts are underway to secure commitments for undertaking pilots in 2005-06.

Rationale: While plans were not completed as scheduled, completion of pilot audits in 2005-06 should be achieved.

Commitment: *Customer service training planned for MNR staff (for example, parks staff, customer service workshops) will*

include a component on awareness of accessibility barriers, (including attitudes), needs and appropriate responses.

Action and Timeframe: Continue to address accessibility issues in customer service training on an ongoing basis.

Status: Commitment met. Customer service training for MNR staff continues to include a component on accessibility.

Commitment: *The ministry will provide information on accessibility requirements / provisions / initiatives on its general Internet site and Intranet site.*

Action and Timeframe: General Internet site redesign for the ministry and development of a communications strategy to be completed by March 2005.

Status: Ongoing. Redesign of the ministry's web site has not been completed pending the establishment of a new content management system for the ministry. As a result, further information on accessibility requirements, provisions and initiatives has not been provided on the ministry's web site.

Rationale: Information on accessibility requirements / provisions / initiatives will be included as part of the ministry's web site redesign.

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Focus of the ministry's and secretariat's actions in its 2005-06 plan is on continuing to incorporate accessibility considerations into the ongoing policy, planning, management and review processes. Communications and staff training/guidance enhancements are also significant in the 2005-06 plan to raise awareness, provide guidance regarding accessibility issues/needs and involve staff in initiating responses. This plan also includes the commitments and strategies for the Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs (OSAA) as noted below.

Legislative Requirements

Section 4 - Built Environment

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will meet the Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities in its facility acquisition, construction or significant renovation to existing or leased facilities. OSAA will be relocating to new premises by the end of the 2005-06 fiscal year. The secretariat will incorporate government-wide accessibility guidelines in the design and construction of its new facilities, as well as current requirements of the Ontario building code.*

Action: MNR and secretariat facility planning, acquisition, construction or substantial renovation will adhere to the government adopted standards for barrier-free design.

Timeframe: MNR and the secretariat will meet this commitment in facility planning and development initiatives undertaken in 2005-06.

Commitment: *New operating proposals to be included in program business plans and in the ministry's and secretariat's corporate business plans for 2006-07 will be reviewed from the standpoint of accessibility issues and measures to ensure prevention of barriers.*

Action: Reviews will be carried out in the Results Based Planning process and will include Section 4 (accessibility to government buildings and premises) and Section 5 (accessibility in procurement of goods and services).

Timeframe: During Results Based Planning for 2006-07 (by March 2006).

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Section 5 - Procurement of goods and services

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will ensure managers and supervisors are given guidance on having regard for accessibility in procurement of goods and services. MNR will continue to implement in its procurement processes the government-wide guidelines for accessibility in procurement.*

Action: MNR and the secretariat will continue to adhere to MBS procurement accessibility guidelines, will communicate these to relevant staff and will incorporate them in the ministry's and secretariat's procurement procedures. The ministry will also review and apply when available the upcoming Accessible Procurement E-module Training Tool for training staff in accessibility provisions in procurement.

Timeframe: 2005-06

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Section 6 - Government Internet sites

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will continue to ensure that Internet sites are accessible, including the*

testing of all new site content.

Action: MNR and secretariat Internet sites continue to meet accessibility requirements. MNR will ensure that accessibility provisions are met in the work underway to redesign the ministry's general web site. The ministry and the secretariat continue to monitor all sites and materials for compliance with ODA accessibility requirements.

Timeframe: 2005-06

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Section 7 - Government publications

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will continue to follow existing guidelines and procedures for meeting accessible format requests through Publications Ontario.*

Action: MNR and the secretariat will continue to work cooperatively with Publications Ontario to provide publications in an ODA compliant format. All ministry and secretariat staff will be provided with ongoing guidance on procedures for responding to requests for publications in accessible formats.

Timeframe: Ongoing for 2005-06.

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Section 8 - Government employee accommodation

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will continue to identify employee accommodation needs and access the Employment Accommodation Fund to accommodate staff with disabilities. Since the secretariat is currently initiating the process of moving to new premises by the end of the 2005-06 fiscal year, part of the plan leading up to that move will incorporate a review of all current furnishings to assess the accommodation needs of current employees and to, where possible, incorporate flexibility in accommodation design to address future demands.*

Action: Ministry and secretariat procedures incorporating these actions regarding staff with disabilities will be followed.

Timeframe: Ongoing for 2005-06.

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will ensure that all existing and new managers and supervisors complete training on accommodating the accessibility needs of employees and job applicants with disabilities.*

Action: Take follow-up action to ensure training of all qualifying managers, supervisors.

Timeframe: Ongoing efforts will be undertaken in 2005-06 to ensure completion of training by managers / supervisors.

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Section 9 - Government funded capital programs

Commitment: *Capital funding proposals in the ministry's corporate business plan for 2006-07 will be reviewed for compliance with requirements under Section 9 of the Ontarians with Disabilities Act. Conformity with the Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities will be an important focus.*

Action: Review proposals for compliance with accessibility requirements

Timeframe: Reviews carried out during Results Based Planning for 2006-07 (by March 2006).

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Section 10 - Accessibility planning

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will continue the work of their accessibility working groups to provide ongoing coordination for accessibility planning and improvements. Increased emphasis will be placed on coordinating the implementation of accessibility provisions.*

Action: Coordination of accessibility planning and improvements

Timeframe: 2005-06 planning period.

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Acts and Regulations

Commitment: *MNR will work cooperatively with other ministries in assessing current provisions for people with disabilities for fees, permits and services.*

Action: MNR will complete discussions with other relevant ministries, and will respond to needs for refinements, improvements in accessibility provisions.

Timeframe: Discussions and initial implementation of results are targeted for completion by March 2006.

Commitment: *In undertaking reviews of legislation and in implementing changes to legislation, MNR will include attention to how the legislation addresses accessibility issues and will ensure that accessibility requirements and guidelines are met as legislative changes are made.*

Action: Specific reviews of legislation will include assessment of how the legislation addresses accessibility requirements and guidelines and implementation of appropriate provisions.

Timeframe: Accessibility considerations will be incorporated in reviews undertaken during the 2005-06 period.

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Policies

Commitment: *Guidance will be provided to staff undertaking policy and program development on how to identify needs and include accessibility provisions in policy and program proposals.*

Action: Develop and implement guidelines for incorporating accessibility considerations in policy and program development.

Timeframe: Finalize guidelines by March 2006. Implementation of the guidelines targeted for March 2007.

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will advance their diversity objectives by examining employment systems processes, tools and documents. Accessibility issues will be an area of focus for this assessment.*

Action: Review of employment systems processes, tools and documents, including attention to accessibility issues, will be undertaken following the establishment and implementation of pending changes in human resource services / delivery underway for the Ontario Public Service.

Timeframe: The ministry and secretariat will commence this review in 2005-06 following implementation of changes in human resource services and delivery currently in progress.

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Programs and Services

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will continue to ensure that accessibility is included in its assessment of MNR and secretariat buildings and in the work underway to develop management strategies for the ministry's accommodation portfolios.*

Action: MNR and the secretariat will continue to ensure that Standards for Barrier-Free Design of Ontario Government Facilities are adhered to in their continuing work to assess facilities and to develop facility management strategies.

Timeframe: 2005-06

Commitment: *Provision will be made in program evaluations undertaken for MNR and secretariat programs to assess provision of access for people with disabilities as an integral part of the program evaluation.*

Action: Guidelines and implementation planning to be completed. Initial program reviews incorporating accessibility considerations to be undertaken.

Timeframe: Targeted for 2005-06 planning period.

Commitment: *Procedures for addressing accessibility will be incorporated in program planning and business planning templates and guidelines. Attention will be paid to a range of accessibility needs including attitude change.*

Action: Development of procedures and incorporation in program planning and corporate planning templates, guidelines.

Timeframe: Guidelines / implementation planning are to be completed by March 2006.

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will continue to include accessibility as an item in periodic client satisfaction surveys. OSAA will incorporate accessibility in its 2005-06 survey.*

Action: Include accessibility in periodic client satisfaction surveys.

Timeframe: Ongoing for 2005-06.

Commitment: *MNR will establish a general inquiry TTY number and further review its 1-800 telephone service to identify priorities for providing TTY access for persons with disabilities.*

Action: Implement general inquiry TTY number; review needs and implement any further provisions as identified.

Timeframe: General inquiry TTY number is being implemented and will be operational by December 1, 2005. Complete review by March 2006.

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will develop an implementation plan for incorporating specific provisions for customer services to people with disabilities and including these provisions in updated customer service procedures.*

Action: Identify specific provisions for customer services to people with disabilities, complete implementation plan and include in customer service procedures. Attention will be paid to a range of measures, including better understanding of needs and improved attitudes toward people with disabilities.

Timeframe: Finalize implementation plan by March 2006. Implementation to commence in 2006-07.

Commitment: *The ministry and the secretariat will work cooperatively with its partner agencies in encouraging and implementing accessibility provisions.*

Action: Identify key partner agencies and initiate discussions regarding accessibility provisions and improvements. Commence priority co-operative actions.

Timeframe: Discussions and co-operative action initiated in 2006-07.

Commitment: *Through electronic service delivery initiatives, the ministry has improved and will continue to improve access for people with disabilities, as well as others, to a variety of direct services including permit issuing, other purchasing, information provision, and query responses. Electronic service options exist for provincial parks and other popular ministry services.*

Action: Improvements to electronic service delivery in accordance with government-wide priorities, initiatives and resource availability.

Timeframe: Ongoing for 2005-06.

Commitment: *In ministry and secretariat office and public use facilities where MNR or the secretariat is considered to have the lead for operating, the ministry or secretariat will have plans in place to assist with the evacuation of staff and visitors with disabilities and will ensure that the plans are incorporated in the Emergency Procedures handbook distributed to all staff. MNR and the secretariat will work with property management to incorporate provisions for people with disabilities within the parameters established for these provisions.*

Action: Ensure needs of people with disabilities continue to be provided for within the parameters established, as new evacuation plans are developed or existing plans / procedures are reviewed, updated.

Timeframe: Ongoing for 2005-06.

Practices

Commitment: *Communicate to ministry and secretariat staff the provisions of the ODA, available guidelines and best practices for accommodating needs of people with disabilities.*

Action: Complete communications strategy and begin implementation.

Timeframe: Communications strategy completed by March 2006.

Commitment: *MNR and the secretariat will provide opportunities for input from staff in identifying accessibility barriers and will include this input in planning for improvements.*

Action: The ministry and the secretariat will develop and implement an accessibility communications strategy to include provisions for input from staff.

Timeframe: Communications strategy completed by March 2006.

Commitment: *Planned accessibility audits will be initiated in several representative MNR sites and program areas to assess accessibility provisions and needs, and identify priorities for addressing needs. These audits will help establish measures and approaches to be adopted in the ministry and will also help raise awareness of staff and program managers regarding accessibility needs.*

Action: Complete planning for pilot audits and undertake pilot audits for representative sites.

Timeframe: Completion of pilot audits in 2005-06.

Commitment: *Customer service training planned for MNR staff (for example, parks staff, customer service workshops) will include a component on awareness of accessibility barriers, (including attitudes), needs and appropriate responses.*

Action: Continue to address accessibility issues in customer service training. Review and include in customer service training as desirable the new Customer Service Training Package, "May I Help You" - Welcoming Customers with Disabilities to be made available this year.

Timeframe: Ongoing during 2005-06.

Commitment: *The ministry will provide information on accessibility requirements / provisions / initiatives on its general Internet site and Intranet site.*

Action: Implement provision of accessibility information on general sites following site redesign and development of a communications strategy.

Timeframe: Provision of information on accessibility requirements / provisions / initiatives on the ministry's general web sites will be done in conjunction with web site redesign which is underway. Anticipate initiation of this information on web sites during the 2005-06 planning period.

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MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES Including ONTARIO SECRETARIAT FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS *2005-2006 Accessibility Plan*

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More Information

Questions or comments about the ministry's accessibility plan are always welcome. Please phone:

General inquiry number:	Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs	1-800-667-1940 416-326-4740
TTY number:	General access TTY number to be initiated by Dec 1, 2005. (In the interim, call 711 for Bell Relay Service to access for MNR 1-800-667-1940 or for OSAA 416-326-4740)	
1-800 number:	Ministry of Natural Resources Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs	1-800-667-1940 (Not available)
E-mail:	MNR OSAA	mnr.nric@mnr.gov.on.ca merike.nurming@jus.gov.on.ca
Ministry web site address:	www.mnr.gov.on.ca	
Secretariat web site address:	www.nativeaffairs.jus.gov.on.ca	

Visit the Ministry of Community and Social Services' Accessibility Ontario web site at: <http://www.mcass.gov.on.ca/accessibility/index.html>. The site promotes accessibility and provides information and resources on how to make Ontario a barrier-free province.

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