

Summary Status Table in Response to the Report of the Auditor General of Ontario

Value-for-Money Audit: Bereavement Authority of Ontario (December 7, 2020)

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed Undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation 15: To help protect the environment and comply with the Environmental Protection Act, we recommend that the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (Environment Ministry): (1) cross-check its list for Environmental Compliance Approvals with the list of crematoriums maintained by the Bereavement Authority of Ontario to ensure that the lists are complete; (2) establish a plan so that the Environment Ministry replaces the outdated Environmental Compliance Approvals issued to crematoriums with those that have terms and conditions that are consistent with current environmental standards; (3) establish a plan to proactively and comprehensively monitor the air emissions of crematoriums at regular intervals.	Ministry staff met with representative of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) to discuss path forward for addressing OAGO recommendations related to HWIN registration and crematorium air emissions (1) The ministry has reviewed the BAO's list of 76 crematoria, and has identified where environmental compliance approvals (ECAs) are in place (68); where an ECA is not required (5); and, where an ECA cannot be confirmed at this time (3) and further review will be required. (2) The Ministry has initiated internal discussions on the development of a project plan, including the scope, criteria, etc. for reviewing and addressing outdated crematoria ECAs. (3) The Ministry is developing a plan for assessing compliance related to air emissions at crematoria in the province.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Environment Ministry) appreciates the Auditor General's recommendations regarding environmental approvals and will take action to improve. The Environment Ministry will follow the suggested recommendations, which include: cross-checking the Bereavement Authority of Ontario's list of licensed crematoriums; and establishing a plan to review and replace outdated Environmental Compliance Approvals and regularly verify that crematoriums meet their emissions monitoring requirements. Outstanding Undertaking: (1) The ministry will continue to review its records to identify where an ECA has been issued to a crematorium that is not on the BAO list. Once this exercise has been completed, the ministry will share its results with the BAO. (2) The Ministry identified to the OAGO a 2-year expected timeline for establishing a plan to review and replace outdated crematoria environmental compliance approvals. (3) The Ministry will be undertaking desktop audits and/or inspections of all crematoria during the 2021-22 fiscal year. It is anticipated that a workplan will be formalized by June 2021 and audit/inspection work will begin in fall 2021.

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Recommendation 16: To help protect the environment and comply with the Environmental Protection Act, we recommend that the Bereavement Authority of Ontario work with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to verify that: (1) all licensed funeral homes (Class 1) possess a current hazardous waste generator number; and (2) all licensed funeral homes (Class 1) with a hazardous waste generator number, but without any declared hazardous waste generation, dispose of hazardous waste properly.	Ministry staff met with representatives of the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) to discuss path forward for addressing OAGO recommendations related to hazardous waste registration and crematorium air emissions Mar 1, 2021: BAO provided the Ministry list of licensed Ontario Funeral Establishment, Transfer Service and Crematorium Operators (list valid as of Feb 28, 2021).	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Environment Ministry) appreciates the Auditor General's recommendations regarding ensuring hazardous waste generated by funeral homes is managed properly. The Environment Ministry will follow up to ensure funeral homes that are generating hazardous waste are registered in our Hazardous Waste Information Network, and those registered are disposing of hazardous waste appropriately. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry is working with BAO to cross reference BAO's list of funeral homes and crematoria determine if they possess a current hazardous waste generator number. It is anticipated that this will be completed by summer 2021. The Ministry developing an inspection plans that review whether funeral homes and crematoria facilities that generate hazardous waste have a generator number and disposes of the material appropriately. The inspection work planning will be completed at the district level for each fiscal.

**Summary Status Table in Response to the
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[VFM: Conserving the Natural Environment With Protected Areas]
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
VFM: Conserving the Natural Environment With Protected Areas		
Recommendation #1 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry) can meet its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserve Act, 2006, to maintain, and restore when possible, ecological integrity in provincial parks and conservation reserves, we recommend that the Ministry: • review its staffing mix to determine the appropriate level of science staff at the park, regional or zone, and head office levels to undertake science activities; • determine the appropriate level of park planners necessary to develop, review and update management plans; and • allocate the necessary staff based on the results of this review.	Within budgetary and staffing limits, for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the Ministry has prioritized the level of science and planning staff at the park, regional or zone, and head office levels to undertake science activities, and has allocated available resources accordingly, including 7 science staff and 12 planning staff.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. Within budgetary and staffing limits, the Ministry will • prioritize the level of science staff at the park, regional or zone, and head office levels to undertake science activities; • evaluate the appropriate level of park planners necessary to develop, review and update management plans; and • allocate the appropriate resources necessary to achieve its legislative mandate. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to allocate science and planning resources each fiscal year.
Recommendation #2 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry) can fulfill its responsibilities under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006, by planning a network of protected areas that maintains Ontario's biodiversity, we recommend that the Ministry: • assess the human resources needed to expand protected areas; • allocate such resources.	Within budgetary and staffing limits for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, the ministry has evaluated the human resources needed to permanently protect a system of provincial parks and conservation reserves and has allocated available resources accordingly.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. Within budgetary and staffing limits, the ministry will evaluate the human resources needed to permanently protect a system of provincial parks and conservation reserves and will allocate the appropriate resources necessary to achieve its legislative mandate. Outstanding Undertaking: On an ongoing basis, the ministry evaluates the human resources needed to permanently protect a system of provincial parks and conservation reserves and continues to allocate accordingly.

Summary Status Table in Response to the Report of the Auditor General of Ontario

[VFM: *Conserving the Natural Environment With Protected Areas*]

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #4 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry) can meet its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserve Act, 2006 to maintain viable and healthy populations of native species, including species at risk, we recommend that the Ministry: • develop a monitoring program to regularly collect information about the types and populations of species at risk and their habitat in each provincial park and conservation reserve; • implement the monitoring program; and • publicly report, as part of the State of Ontario's Protected Areas Report, on the status of species at risk and their habitats in provincial parks and conservation reserves based on the results of its monitoring program.	The Ministry uses the best available science and information in managing all aspects of provincial parks and conservation reserves and increase the scientific information that is available. The Ministry has reported publicly on certain aspects of the state of the provincial park and conservation reserve system at www.ontarioparks.com/sopar and will report on additional aspects during 2021. The Ministry is currently supporting and coordinating community science efforts to monitor certain species in provincial parks and conservation reserves in the form of the Breeding Bird Atlas and iNaturalist.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry recognizes the importance of the Auditor General's findings regarding developing a monitoring program to collect information about the types and populations of species at risk. The Ministry is currently developing strategies on how it generates, acquires, manages and uses science and information to inform policy, planning, management and operations. The Ministry will endeavor to use the best available science and information in managing all aspects of provincial parks and conservation reserves and increase the scientific information that is available. The Ministry will establish or adopt consistent standards, protocols and information management systems to support monitoring the types and populations of species at risk and their habitat in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will support external science partners and collaborators in their monitoring efforts species at risk and their habitat. The Ministry will support and coordinate community science efforts to monitor appropriate species at risk populations and their habitat in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will report publicly on the state of the provincial park and conservation reserve system, including the results of monitoring species at risk in provincial parks and conservation reserves. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry is currently developing strategies on how it generates, acquires, manages and uses science and information to inform policy, planning, management and operations. Anticipated timeline for completion of a draft Ontario Parks Science Strategy is the end of 2021. The Ministry will continue to establish or adopt consistent standards, protocols and information management systems to support monitoring

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		the types and populations of species at risk and their habitat in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will continue to support external science partners and collaborators in their monitoring efforts species at risk and their habitat.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

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Recommendation #5 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry) can meet its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserve Act, 2006 to maintain viable and healthy populations of native species in provincial parks and conservation reserves, we recommend that the Ministry: • collect information about the extent and type of invasive species by provincial park and conservation reserve; • assess the impacts of invasive species in individual provincial parks and conservation reserves; and • take the necessary actions, where feasible, to reduce or eliminate invasive species and their negative impacts in provincial parks and conservation reserves.	The Ministry is currently supporting and coordinating community science efforts to monitor certain species in provincial parks and conservation reserves in the form of the Breeding Bird Atlas and iNaturalist. The Ministry regularly collects information on invasive species, assesses their impacts, and takes actions to reduce or eliminate them, within provincial parks and conservation reserves where feasible and within budget and staffing limits.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry will develop consistent standards and platforms for data collection on the extent and type of invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will continue to engage with and support external science partners and collaborators in their science and monitoring efforts regarding invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will support and coordinate community science efforts regarding invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves. Where appropriate, the Ministry will assess the impacts of invasive species in individual provincial parks and conservation reserves to inform management planning and resource stewardship activities. The Ministry recognizes the importance of reducing or eliminating negative impacts in provincial parks and conservation reserves and intends to take the necessary actions, where feasible, to reduce or eliminate invasive species and their negative impacts in provincial parks and conservation reserves. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will develop or adopt consistent standards and platforms for data collection on the extent and type of invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves. Timeline: end of 2022. The Ministry will continue to engage with and support external science partners and collaborators in their science and monitoring efforts regarding invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will continue to support and coordinate community science efforts regarding invasive species in provincial parks and conservation reserves.

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[VFM: Conserving the Natural Environment With Protected Areas]

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #6 So that hunting, fishing, trapping and other activities in provincial parks and conservation reserves are ecologically sustainable, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • work with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to gather information about the extent of hunting, fishing and trapping activities in each provincial park and conservation reserve; • assess the ecological impacts of such activities in provincial parks and conservation reserves; and • take necessary actions to mitigate any negative ecological impacts of the activities.	The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regularly engages with MECP as it relates to resource management planning, including fisheries and wildlife management and associated Indigenous harvest that occur in provincial parks and conservation reserves, including discussions or considerations around mitigation negative ecological impacts. MNRF administers hunting, fishing and trapping on the basis of broader landscape units (wildlife management units, fisheries management zones and traplines respectively); there are no licence requirements specific to provincial parks and conservation reserves, and neither MNRF nor MECP collect information on these activities specific to provincial parks and conservation reserves.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry recognizes the importance of the Auditor General's recommendations. The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's finding and will continue to provide input to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry on planning for its monitoring programs. The Ministry will utilize relevant information gathered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to help inform provincial park and conservation reserve management decisions. The Ministry will provide input to MNRF on planning for its monitoring activities and support MNRF's landscape scale assessments of the ecological impacts of hunting, fishing and trapping activities within MECP's mandate and capacity. The Ministry recognizes the importance of mitigating any negative ecological impacts and will take the necessary actions to mitigate any negative ecological impacts of hunting, fishing and trapping activities through planning and management of provincial parks and conservation reserves. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to engage with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry regularly on resource management planning, including fisheries and wildlife management and associated Indigenous harvest that occur in provincial parks and conservation reserves.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #8 To enhance ecological integrity in Algonquin Provincial Park by treating more of it as a protected area, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in consultation with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry: • review the impact of the current level of commercial logging in Algonquin Provincial Park on the ecological integrity of the Park; and • amend the Algonquin Park Management Plan to implement the results of this review.	A 2018 joint memo between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Ontario Parks provides direction for how the Forest Management Planning process is expected to meet requirements under the <i>Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006</i> regarding maintenance of ecological integrity. A 2019 agreement between the two ministries provided direction with respect to forest management planning and operations responsibilities and the protection of park values. The Ministry is actively engaged in the development and review of the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan, including assigning two planners to participate on the planning team and a biologist as a plan advisor to reflect the Ministry's perspective and mandate in the preparation of the Forest Management Plan which includes assessments of indicators such as old growth forest	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. A 2018 joint memo between the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Ontario Parks provides direction for how the Forest Management Planning process is expected to meet requirements under the <i>Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006</i> regarding maintenance of ecological integrity. A 2019 agreement between the two ministries provided direction with respect to forest management planning and operations responsibilities and the protection of park values. The Ministry is actively engaged in the development and review of the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan, including assigning two planners to participate on the planning team and a biologist as a plan advisor to reflect the Ministry's perspective and mandate in the preparation of the Forest Management Plan which includes assessments of indicators such as old growth forest based on current harvest levels. The Ministry will consider these recommendations as it continues to review and amend the Algonquin Park Management Plan as required. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to be actively engaged in the development and review of the 2021-2031 Forest Management Plan and will amend the Algonquin Park Management Plan as required.

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	based on current harvest levels. The Ministry will consider these recommendations as it continues to review and amend the Algonquin Park Management Plan as required.	

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #9 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (Ministry) complies with its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006 we recommend that the Ministry: • develop a strategy to have up-to-date management plans in place for regulated provincial parks and conservation reserves; and • implement the strategy.	The Ministry recognizes the importance of the Auditor General's finding and recognizes the time and resource commitments required to have up-to-date management plans in place for regulated provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry continues to implement the management plan examination process and planning prioritization model to evaluate and compare planning needs to appropriately focus efforts and have up-to-date management plans for provincial parks and conservation reserves.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry recognizes the importance of the Auditor General's finding and recognizes the time and resource commitments required to have up-to-date management plans in place for regulated provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will examine ways to simplify and expedite the planning process, while meeting all legislative requirements and policy guidance and addressing requests for involvement by Indigenous communities and stakeholders, so that provincial parks and conservation reserves have up-to-date management plans in place. The Ministry will implement the management plan examination process and planning prioritization model to evaluate and compare planning needs to appropriately focus efforts and have up-to-date management plans for provincial parks and conservation reserves. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will develop a draft strategy to simplify and expedite the planning process, while meeting all legislative requirements and policy guidance and addressing requests for involvement by Indigenous communities and stakeholders, so that provincial parks and conservation reserves have up-to-date management plans in place. A draft strategy is anticipated to be complete April 30, 2022.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

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Recommendation #10 To help achieve the objective of the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006, to permanently protect a network of provincial parks and conservation reserves, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks work with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to: • establish a long-term area-based target for expanding its protected areas with associated timelines; • develop a long-term strategy that outlines specific actions the ministries will take to achieve its targets; • implement the plan; and • publicly report on their progress toward this strategy as part of an annual report to be accountable.	The Ministry has established a Protected Areas Working Group to provide recommendations on how to expand provincial parks, conservation reserves and other protected areas, and identify potential roles of public-private partnerships in this regard. The Ministry regularly works with Natural Resources Ministry to consider any opportunities to expand the protected area system using the ministry's selection and design criteria for protected areas. The Ministry has publicly reported on the progress in expanding the system of provincial parks and conservation reserves as part of the State of Ontario Protected Areas Report published in April 2021.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry will focus its short-term efforts on identifying a work plan to expand the province's network of provincial parks and conservation reserves. The Ministry will work in collaboration with the Natural Resources Ministry to consider any opportunities to expand the protected area system using the ministry's selection and design criteria for protected areas. The Ministry will report publicly on the progress in expanding the system of provincial parks and conservation reserves. Outstanding Undertaking: The Protected Areas Working Group will submit a report of recommendations to the Minister, who will consider the recommendations when making policy decisions moving forward. This report is anticipated to be submitted to the Minister in Summer 2021 and will be considered when developing long-term strategies for expanding the protected areas system.

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[VFM: Conserving the Natural Environment With Protected Areas]

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

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Recommendation #11 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks is making concrete progress towards compliance with the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006 by planning a network of protected areas that conserves nature by maintaining Ontario's biodiversity, we recommend that the Ministry: • assess the financial resources needed to implement the actions described in a long-term strategy to expand protected areas, as described in Recommendation 10; and • allocate such resources.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. Within budgetary and staffing limits, the Ministry will evaluate the resources needed to permanently protect a system of provincial parks and conservation reserves and allocate the appropriate resources necessary to plan a network of protected areas that contributes to conserving nature and maintaining Ontario's rich biodiversity. Outstanding Undertaking: The Minister will consider the results and analysis of the Protected Areas Working Group report when making policy decisions moving forward. The Ministry's long term strategy for expanding the protected areas system will also be considered when assessing the financial resources required to expand protected areas and allocating resources, based on available resources and priorities.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #12 To meet its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006, to permanently protect ecosystems that are representative of all of Ontario's natural regions, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, in developing its long-term protected area strategy in Recommendation 10, include actions specifically targeted toward increasing protected area coverage in southern Ontario such as establishing partnerships with conservation organizations that can assist in establishing and managing protected areas and restoring degraded habitats.	The Ministry recognizes the importance of increasing protected area coverage in southern Ontario and is working with partner organizations in southern Ontario, including the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Land Trust Alliance and other conservation organizations, to look for opportunities to establish, expand and manage protected areas and restore degraded habitats. The Ministry is working with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance to develop and implement the Greenlands Conservation Partnership. This partnership will provide \$20 million over four years for the land trusts to secure and manage new privately protected areas in areas identified through systematic conservation planning. The first year of the Transfer Payment Agreements is in place in being implemented, and several important properties have been secured.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry recognizes the importance of increasing protected area coverage in southern Ontario and will endeavour to work with partner organizations in southern Ontario, including the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Land Trust Alliance and other conservation organizations, to look for opportunities to establish, expand and manage protected areas and restore degraded habitats. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to administer the Greenlands Conservation Partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and Ontario Land Trust Alliance for securement and management of key properties over the next three years. Transfer Payment Agreements for the remaining three years are in development.

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Recommendation #13 To meet its legislative responsibility under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006, to permanently protect ecosystems that are representative of all of Ontario's natural regions, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, in developing its long-term protected area plan in Recommendation 10, use known key biodiversity areas to identify new potential protected areas.	The Ministry is supporting MNRF's review of the proposed "National Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas in Canada" to help inform whether Ontario will formally accept the standard.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's finding and will use any identified key biodiversity areas as a criterion for identifying and evaluating new potential protected areas. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will assess the outcome of MNRF's review to consider the use of Key Biodiversity Areas in informing priorities for new protected areas.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #16 To recognize and encourage work done to conserve biodiversity by conservation authorities, municipalities and others, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • implement a public outreach program to further increase awareness among all potential contributors to the accounting of protected areas; and • screen site submissions within a defined and reasonable period of time after receipt.	The Ministry participates in pan-Canadian initiatives to further increase awareness among all potential contributors of the accounting of protected areas, including providing up to date information to the Pathway to Canada Target 1 website and Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database. The Ministry continues to work cooperatively with conservation partners and as part of the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative to screen site submissions within a defined and reasonable period of time. The most recent November 2020 bulk submission to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) included an additional 148 privately-owned protected areas and OECMs, accounting for over 9,000 hectares. MECP has now submitted over 350 privately owned areas that account for over 32,000 hectares. The Ministry is providing in-kind support for work commissioned by the federal government with	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges the Auditor General's recommendation. The Ministry will participate in pan-Canadian initiatives to further increase awareness among all potential contributors of the accounting of protected areas, including providing up to date information to the Pathway to Canada Target 1 website and Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database. The Ministry will work cooperatively with conservation partners and as part of the Pathway to Canada Target 1 initiative to screen site submissions within a defined and reasonable period of time. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to screen and submit areas to the Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD) as they are brought forward.

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	conservation partners to increase awareness and screen sites owned by members of the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and by local governments through a contract with Ontario Nature.	

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*Chapters 1 & 2 of the 2020 Annual Report of the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks*

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Chapter 1: Operation of the <i>Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993</i> "Transparency and Accountability in Environmental Decision-Making"		
Recommendation #2 So that the purposes of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act) can be met, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • review all government ministries to identify those that make decisions that could have a significant effect on the environment; • review all laws to identify those that could have a significant effect on the environment; and • take steps to have such government ministries and laws prescribed under the EBR Act.	Consequential updates to O. Reg. 681 were made in March 2021 to reflect changes to the <i>Mining Act</i>.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is meeting our legislative obligations under the EBR Act. Under the EBR Act, individual ministries are responsible for determining whether they, or acts they administer, should be subject to the EBR Act. The Ministry administers the EBR Act and works with partner ministries on an annual basis to identify and bring forward any changes needed to the regulations. The Ministry will continue to provide advice to partner ministries about the requirements of the EBR Act to help them determine whether a ministry or acts they administer should be prescribed. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry continues to provide advice to partner ministries about the requirements of the EBR Act when requested. The Ministry is currently working with partner ministries to identify additional updates needed to the regulations for 2021, and anticipates posting updates for consultation in Spring 2021.

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Recommendation #3 • So that the purposes of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act) can be met, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: establish and follow processes to regularly review newly created ministries, and existing ministries whose mandates have changed, to identify those that make decisions that could have a significant effect on the environment; • establish and follow processes to regularly review newly passed laws, and existing laws that have been amended, to identify those that could have a significant effect on the environment; and • take steps to have such government ministries and laws prescribed under the EBR Act.	Consequential updates to O. Reg. 681 were made in March 2021 to reflect changes to the <i>Mining Act</i>.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is meeting our legislative obligations under the EBR Act. Under the EBR Act, individual ministries are responsible for determining whether they, or acts they administer, should be subject to the Act. The Ministry is currently working with partner ministries to develop a consolidated proposal for updates to regulations under the EBR Act, and anticipates bringing forward a suite of amendments in winter 2020. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry continues to provide advice to partner ministries about the requirements of the EBR Act when requested. The Ministry is currently working with partner ministries to identify additional updates needed to the regulations for 2021, and anticipates posting updates for consultation in Spring 2021.
Recommendation #4 So that Ontarians can exercise their rights under Part II of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act) to participate in the government's environmentally significant decision-making, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks when proposing that Cabinet use its regulation-making authority under the EBR Act to provide exemptions from Part II of the EBR Act, scope the proposed exemptions so that Ontarians' Part II rights are affected to the least extent possible.	N/A – the Ministry has not proposed any new exemptions to EBR requirements.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry appreciates this recommendation. When situations arise that may require an exemption under the EBR Act by Cabinet, the Ministry will propose that the scope of the exemption is as limited as possible based on policy needs and direction received. Outstanding Undertaking: N/A – the Ministry has not proposed any new exemptions to EBR requirements.

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Recommendation #5 To minimize the negative effects of O. Reg. 115/20, Temporary Exemptions Relating to Declared Emergency, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry repost those proposals that were subject to the exemption and that are still under consideration, to restore Ontarians' leave to appeal rights under the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993.	N/A – the Ministry did not commit to a specific action in response to this recommendation.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry will not be reposting proposals subject to the O. Reg. 115/20 temporary exemption that are still under consideration. The temporary exemption was put in place to help ensure the health of all Ontarians while maintaining continuity of important operations. While O. Reg. 115/20 was in effect, environmental protection continued to be a priority in all government decision-making, and we continued to be transparent with the public. For example, despite the exemption from posting requirements, ministries were expected to continue to post regular proposal notices, with public consultation, for matters that did not require urgent action to respond to the COVID-19 provincial emergency. Where urgent action was required, ministries posted information notices on the Environmental Registry to ensure public transparency. Outstanding Undertaking: N/A – the Ministry did not commit to a specific action in response to this recommendation.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks*

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #6 To engage the public in the government's environmentally significant decision-making in accordance with the purposes of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act), we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing: - consistently consult with the public about environmentally significant proposals in accordance with the requirements under Part II of the EBR Act; and - refrain from using provisions that deem proposals to be exempt from the EBR Act.	The Ministry continues to meet its consultation obligations under the EBR. In Fall 2020, the Ministry posted a proposal posting to consult on the projects that would require a comprehensive environmental assessment. The policy proposal may be found at www.ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2377. In addition to the ERO posting we consulted with Indigenous communities, stakeholders, and the general public through webinars and 1:1 sessions. We continue to discuss the proposal with Indigenous communities.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry appreciates this recommendation, and will take it into consideration in developing any future legislative proposals. The Ministry will work to meet its consultation obligations under the EBR Act, and is committed to consulting with the public on environmental assessment modernization. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to consult with the public and Indigenous communities on our work to modernize the environmental assessment program in accordance with Part II of the EBR Act. Later this year, the Ministry will begin to consult on a number of proposals including, a draft Comprehensive EA Projects regulation, an expiry date exemption regulation and a streamlined EA regulation for municipal infrastructure that will allow the Ministry to make important progress in its work to further modernize the environmental assessment program.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks*

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #7 So that public consultations are open and transparent, we recommend that prescribed ministries, when carrying out stakeholder consultations that are in addition to the Environmental Registry process, engage stakeholders from all key sectors.	The Ministry's Species at Risk Branch engaged with stakeholders from all key sectors, and Indigenous communities and organizations through two general information sessions, two Indigenous listening sessions, two workshops, and 20 one-on-one meetings, in addition to the publicly posted proposal on the Environmental Registry (019-2636). The Ministry routinely engages with a variety of interested sectors and stakeholders as part of policy development and will continue to do so going forward. In addition to its ERO postings, the Ministry engaged / is engaging with key stakeholders through a variety of mediums, e.g., webinars, working group and one-on-one meetings. The Ministry has and will continue to reach out to stakeholders (including industry, technical experts, local citizens, non-governmental	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation and is committed to meeting our legislative obligations under the EBR Act, enabling all Ontarians to participate in important environmental decisions. The Ministry engages the public, stakeholders, and Indigenous partners through a variety of means, including dedicated outreach, focused consultation sessions, and specialized working groups in addition to posting proposals through the Registry. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry is considering comments received and continues to consult with Indigenous communities as it works to finalize the proposed amendments to the Class EAs and exemption regulations and the proposed comprehensive project list. In addition, as the regulations are developed to modernize the EA program, the Ministry will, in addition to ERO postings, conduct webinars and stakeholder sessions with industry, non-governmental organizations, the public, and consult directly with Indigenous communities and organizations. Parties who have expressed interest in EA modernization activities are added to our contact list to ensure they remain informed of opportunities to participate in consultation.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
	environmental organizations and others) as appropriate. The Ministry, in addition to the ERO posting for the comprehensive EA project list, held webinars with stakeholders, industry, the public and Indigenous communities and has continued to meet individually upon request.	

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #9 So that prescribed ministries can benefit from informed feedback and Ontarians can meaningfully participate in the decision-making process for environmentally significant proposals, we recommend that, when posting a number of interrelated proposals on the Environmental Registry that contribute to a common objective, prescribed ministries: • describe the common objective that the proposals are intended to achieve, the role that each proposal plays in achieving the common objective, and the implications and anticipated environmental impacts of the proposals, individually and collectively; • provide an adequate comment period with sufficient time for Ontarians to review and understand the impacts of the proposals; • include links to all related proposal notices in each posting; and • if postings are staggered, update the notices to include relevant information and links.	The Ministry worked with the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines to coordinate four postings for Bill 213 - Better for People, Smarter for Business Act, 2020. Comment periods for all four notices were extended beyond 30 days. The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks worked closely with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to coordinate one single environmental registry proposal posting relating to a proposal by Neskantaga First Nation to establish a biomass energy facility. The proposal posting describes two separate interrelated regulatory proposals to achieve one common objective. A 46-day comment period is being provided. https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-3290.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges this recommendation and recognizes the importance of Ontarians' participation in the decision-making process for proposals that could significantly affect the environment, and works with other ministries to co-ordinate postings, where feasible. This also includes considerations to extend comment periods beyond 30 days. The Ministry will consider how best to co-ordinate interrelated postings on a case-by-case basis, for initiatives with common goals and objectives. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to coordinate postings with prescribed ministries where appropriate.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #10 So that the species conservation charge is used to improve outcomes for species at risk, consistent with the purposes of the Endangered Species Act, 2007, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks consult with the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario and with the public through the Environmental Registry when developing the applicable regulations and guidance.	From November 3, 2020 through January 2021, the Ministry consulted with the public, Indigenous communities and relevant stakeholders, including through the Environmental Registry, on regulations to enable use of the Species at Risk Conservation Fund and to prescribe conservation fund species and associated charges.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry intends to consult with the public, Indigenous communities and relevant stakeholders, including through the Environmental Registry, on any regulations to enable use of the Species at Risk Conservation Fund and to prescribe conservation fund species and associated charges. The content of any future regulations will be recommended to Cabinet for deliberation and a final decision. Outstanding Undertaking: The content of any future regulations will be recommended to Cabinet for deliberation and a final decision.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #11 So that the use of the species conservation charge does not reduce protection of any species, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks develop principles and standards to guide implementation of the species conservation charge that meet the purposes of the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and that address issues such as: • limiting the use of the charge to activities that do not harm species listed as endangered; • limiting the use of the charge to circumstances where the proponent demonstrates that harm will come to the species or its habitat regardless of measures the proponent takes to avoid it, or demonstrates that there are no measures that can be taken to avoid harm; • requiring that funds be directed to protecting the same species that are harmed; and • the timing and location of habitat protection and enhancement (for example, requiring that measures be carried out as near as possible to the damaged or destroyed habitat and before or as soon as possible after the habitat is damaged or destroyed).	The Ministry is considering these recommendations in developing the criteria for the use of the Species at Risk Conservation Fund.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry will consider these recommendations in developing the criteria for the use of the Species at Risk Conservation Fund. After receiving and incorporating input from stakeholders, including consultation under the EBR Act, the regulations will be recommended for approval by Treasury Board and Cabinet. Outstanding Undertaking: The regulations will be recommended for approval by Treasury Board and Cabinet.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #12 So that the protection and recovery of species at risk under the Endangered Species Act, 2007, are not unduly delayed or adversely affected by significant delays, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: - consult with the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario and with the public through the Environmental Registry on any proposal to suspend protections, prior to adopting a suspension order; and - complete recovery strategies, government response statements and the review of progress within the statutory deadlines.	The Ministry published reviews of progress for four species in December 2020 and published a government response statement for one species in January 2021, in accordance with statutory deadlines.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry will consider these recommendations if circumstances arise where the Minister is proposing to suspend protections, in accordance with the criteria prescribed in the legislation. The Ministry endeavours to meet the legislative timelines for completing recovery strategies, government response statements and reviews of progress. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to use a science-based approaches and will consider the recommendations as the specified circumstances arise and will continue to endeavour to meet legislative timelines.
Recommendation #13 So that implementation of the changed standards does not reduce the level of protection for species at risk, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: - develop quantitative and qualitative measures relevant to the protection and recovery of the species at risk affected by permits and other authorizations; - monitor implementation of the different types of authorizations to determine progress toward meeting those measures; and - publicly report, at a minimum, every five years on that progress.	No actions to report.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges this recommendation and will consider these recommendations as it continues to work with stakeholders to avoid impacts to species at risk, where possible. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will consider these recommendations as it continues to work with stakeholders to avoid impacts to species at risk, where possible.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #14 So that landscape agreements are consistently used to improve outcomes for all species at risk, consistent with the purposes of the Endangered Species Act, 2007, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks consult with the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario and with the public through the Environmental Registry when developing the applicable regulations and policy statements.	The Ministry has not yet developed regulations and policies related to landscape agreements.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is committed to transparency and accountability – we recognize the importance of consulting with the public on decisions that affect the environment. We will consult with the public, Indigenous communities and relevant stakeholders, including through the Environmental Registry, on any regulations and policies developed related to landscape agreements. The content of any future regulations will be deliberated and decided by Cabinet. This includes engaging with the Species at Risk Program Advisory Committee (SARPAC), a committee established under the Endangered Species Act, 2007 comprised of members from a variety of fields with experience in implementing the Act, whose mandate is to make recommendations to the Minister on various matters related to species at risk, including the development of policy and regulation. The Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario is an independent, science-based committee whose primary focus is to assess and classify species at risk in Ontario. As a result, the Ministry feels it is more appropriate to consult with SARPAC on these matters. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry has not yet developed policies or regulations related to landscape agreements.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #15 So that the implementation of landscape agreements improves outcomes for all species at risk, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks review the principles and standards for species at risk compensation in other jurisdictions and develop principles and standards to guide the implementation of agreements that meet the purposes of the Endangered Species Act, 2007 and address issues such as: • the goal to be achieved by agreements (for example, "net gain" or "no net loss" of species and habitats); • whether measures such as conservation banking will be permitted only after measures to avoid and minimize impacts have been taken; • whether agreements should be limited to circumstances where species listed as endangered will not be affected; • requiring beneficial actions for all affected species at risk; • effective timing of habitat protection or enhancement measures; • the development of qualitative and quantitative performance measures for affected species at risk; and • monitoring and regular reporting to the public on progress toward meeting those measures (for example, reporting, at a minimum, every five years).	The Ministry has not yet developed a landscape agreement.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry will consider these recommendations in developing landscape agreements pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, 2007. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry has not yet developed a landscape agreement.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #16 So that Ontarians can readily find information about all environmental proposals and decisions, we recommend that prescribed ministries continue to use the Environmental Registry as the central website for all environmental notices regardless of whether more detailed information is provided elsewhere.	The Ministry posted 149 policies, acts, regulations and bulletin notices on the Environmental Registry between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation and will continue to use the Environmental Registry as the central website for posting notices as required under the EBR Act and other Ministry legislation, so that Ontarians can readily find information about environmental proposals and decisions. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to use the Environmental Registry as the central website for posting notices as required under the EBR and other Ministry legislation.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Chapter 2: Operation of the <i>Environmental Bill of Rights</i>, 1993 Ministry Report Cards		
Recommendation #1 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' Statement of Environmental Values (Statement) reflects the Ministry's current environmental values and responsibilities, we recommend that the Ministry review its Statement with public consultation through the Environmental Registry and update it to reflect its new responsibilities.	The Ministry posted an amended Statement of Environmental Values (SEV) on the Environmental Registry for consultation for 60 days from December 22, 2020 to February 20, 2021. The proposed amendments include: • Changes to reflect the Ministry's expanded mandate, • A new climate change section to reflect the Environment Plan's focus on climate change, • A provision that would require that the SEV is reviewed every five years, and • Administrative amendments.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees that its Statement of Environmental Values (Statement), last updated in 2008, requires an update to reflect current values, priorities and responsibilities. The Ministry has initiated the process to update its Statement, which will be informed by the government's Made-In-Ontario Environment Plan, and anticipates posting a revised statement for consultation by the end of 2020. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will post a decision notice on the Environmental Registry once all comments received have been reviewed and a final decision has been made.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #2 To be transparent and accountable to Ontarians about its decision-making by adhering to the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 requirements to consider its Statement of Environmental Values whenever making a decision that might significantly affect the environment, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks consider its Statement at the time that it makes a decision that might significantly affect the environment, and document that consideration concurrently with the decision-making.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges this recommendation. The Ministry strives to ensure that due consideration is given to the principles of environmental protection as outlined in our current Statement of Environmental Values when we make decisions that might significantly affect the environment. The Ministry also considers specific guiding principles directly related to the scope of the proposed project and our regulatory responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act and Ontario Water Resources Act, requirements, and best management practices. Outstanding Undertaking: In fiscal 2021-22, as part of addressing the other OAGO recommendations related to the environmental compliance approval (ECA) instrument posting processes, and where appropriate, the Ministry will consider completing a SEV document as part of the ECA file that reiterates how consideration was given to the principles of environmental protection.
Recommendation #3 To engage the public in the government's environmentally significant decision-making, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks consistently consult with the public according to the requirements of Part II of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry acknowledges this recommendation. Public consultation and engagement are important to informed decision-making. We respect our obligations to provide a means for Ontarians to participate in Ministry decision-making and we will consult with the public as required under the EBR Act. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry has consistently engaged the public in the government's environmentally significant decision-making, and will continue to do so according to the requirements of Part II of the EBR.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #4 So that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks can receive informed feedback on environmentally significant proposals posted on the Environmental Registry, we recommend that the Ministry extend the comment period beyond 30 days for significant and complex proposals to provide enough time to obtain more informed input from the public.	The Ministry extends posting periods beyond 30 days on the Environmental Registry where such extensions are warranted.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation and acknowledges its obligation to facilitate informed public consultation under the EBR Act. This includes consideration of posting periods beyond 30 days and extending the comment period where warranted. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry continues to fulfill its obligations under the EBR and will continue to consider posting periods beyond 30 days where warranted.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #5 So that Ontarians can better understand proposals and provide informed comments on environmentally significant Ministry proposals, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks describe the environmental implications of each proposal posted on the Environmental Registry.	The Ministry prepared Statements of Environmental Values (SEV) for each of its postings to describe environmental implications. Since the recommendation by the OAGO was made, the Ministry's Environmental Assessment and Permissions Division (EAPD) has posted three proposal notices on the Environmental Registry. • https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2724 • https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-3370 • https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2876 For each of these proposal postings, MECP has taken care to ensure that the proposal posting includes a description of the potential environmental implications of the proposal. The joint MNRF-MECP proposal posting for the Neskantaga First Nation proposed biomass facility (https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-3290) also includes a	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is committed to ensuring the contents of its notices for proposals for acts, regulations and policies enable Ontarians to understand what is being proposed. We strive to strike a balance of providing an accurate, detailed description of the proposal with the goal of communicating in an easy-to understand, plain-language manner. Moving forward, the Ministry will look to highlight the environmentally significant aspects of all of our proposals for acts, regulations and policies so that Ontarians can provide informed comments. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry strives to provide as much detail as possible in postings on the Environmental Registry to describe the environmentally significant aspects and implications of proposals, based on the information available at the time of posting. The Ministry will continue to highlight the environmentally significant aspects of all our proposals for acts, regulations and policies so that Ontarians can provide informed comments.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
	description of the potential environmental implications associated with the proposal.	
Recommendation #6 So that Ontarians can better understand proposals and provide informed comments on environmentally significant Ministry proposals for permits and approvals posted on the Environmental Registry, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks describe the details and environmental implications of each proposed permit and approval in the proposal notice.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is committed to ensuring the description of the details and environmental implications in instrument proposal notices enable Ontarians to understand what is being proposed. The Ministry will update guidance for proponents and work with applicants to expand descriptions. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will update guidance for proponents (Q1 2021) and work with applicants to expand descriptions, as needed.
Recommendation #7 To give Ontarians prompt notice of its environmentally significant decisions, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks post all decision notices on the Environmental Registry as soon as reasonably possible after making a decision, which should be within two weeks of making the decision, as stated in its own service standard.	The Ministry has communicated, through training and resources for staff, that posting decisions within two weeks is the Ministry's standard practice unless there are extenuating circumstances	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation. The Ministry has updated its Environmental Registry training resources for staff, communicating its best practice for posting decision notices on the Environmental Registry within two weeks of a decision being made, unless extenuating circumstances prevent it from doing so. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry continues to communicate, through training and resources for staff, that posting decisions within two weeks is the Ministry's standard practice unless there are extenuating circumstances.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #8 To help people understand the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' decisions about permits and approvals, and the effect of public comments on those decisions, we recommend that the Ministry: - clearly describe the effect, if any, of public participation on the Ministry's decision making on the proposal, including whether participation led to any changes to the proposal; and - provide links to the final issued approval.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation. The Ministry always strives to include, in the decision notice, an adequate description of how public comments were considered in the Ministry's review of a proposal for a permit or environmental compliance approval, as well as a copy of the final issued approval (if applicable). Copies of some issued permits and environmental compliance approvals are also available on the Ministry's public Access Environment website once the decision has been issued. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to provide refresher training to staff on preparing instrument decision notices and update internal guidance to provide examples of adequate decision descriptions (Q1 2021).
Recommendation #9 So that Ontarians get timely and reliable information about the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks' decisions about the environment, we recommend that the Ministry follow its internal procedure to bring and keep all of its proposal notices up to date, including posting decision notices for proposals that have been decided or that are otherwise no longer under consideration by the Ministry.	Since April 1, 2020 decisions or updates were posted on the Environmental Registry for 104 of the 107 outdated notices.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation. The Ministry is committed to providing timely information regarding decision notices. The Ministry has a process in place to regularly identify proposal notices that remain open (i.e., without a decision) on the Environmental Registry and post decision notices on where decisions have been made on proposals. The Ministry recently remedied most of the open proposal notices that had been left without a decision notice or update for over two years as of March 31, 2020. Outstanding Undertaking: N/A (ongoing as part of regular Ministry business).

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #10 To ensure that Ontarians are informed about appeals and leave to appeal applications related to environmentally significant permits and approvals that are subject to the requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act), we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks promptly post appeal notices on the Environmental Registry for all appeals and leave to appeal applications received by the Ministry.	Per the Ministry's original response, internal procedures have since been updated. The Ministry received two appeals and two leave to appeals under the EBR since April 1, 2020. All notices were promptly posted with the exception of one appeal, which was incomplete and required the Ministry to obtain additional information from the applicant.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation. The Ministry promptly posted all such notices received from appellants and applicants, as required by the EBR Act. In some cases, the Tribunal decides to consider an appeal or leave to appeal where an appellant or applicant has not provided notice to the Ministry, and therefore public notice has not been given. In these cases, the Ministry now has a process in place to post notice of the appeal or leave to appeal once notified by the Tribunal. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to promptly post all appeals and leave to appeals received as required by the EBR.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #11 To adhere to the requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 to complete reviews within a reasonable time, and to give applicants a timely resolution to their applications, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks provide reasonable completion dates to each applicant and complete each review by such time.	The Ministry endeavors to provide applicants with timely decisions on applications for review and to conclude outstanding applications for review as soon as is reasonably possible, as per the EBR. RE: 16EBR004 Review, the Ministry is drafting an initial response to the applicant and exploring the possibility of closing it by addressing the linkages to the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan (LSPP) outside of this application for review, as the LSPP 10-year review is currently underway. Furthermore, the Minister's decision on whether to amend the LSPP policies will be a separate decision that will be made sometime later this year (summer 2021– TBD) RE: 16EBR005 Review, the review was completed on April 1, 2021 with the expiry of the bottled water moratorium and the release of the enhancements to Ontario's water taking program. The Ministry is targeting to provide the	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry agrees with this recommendation. The Ministry is making every attempt to complete these reviews in a timely fashion; three reviews have been closed off since March 31, 2020, and the Ministry continues to work to conclude the remainder. Updates will be provided to the applicants as appropriate. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to work towards completing reviews and providing timely resolution to applicants.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
	applicants with notice of the results of the review by end of the month (i.e., within 30 days of the completion of the review). The Ministry completed 17EBR006.R-Review of the need for routine monitoring of Class 9 pesticides in watercourses runoff flowing from golf courses in March 2021. The Ministry notified the applicants on March 18, 2021 by sharing the review summary and a draft technical report.	
Recommendation #12 To ensure that Ontarians are aware of their environmental rights and how to exercise them, and to meet the education requirements of the Environmental Bill of Rights, 1993 (EBR Act), we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks develop and implement a plan for providing educational programs about the EBR Act to a broad range of Ontarians.		Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry is committed to enhancing its education to Ontarians about the EBR Act and how to exercise their rights. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry is finalizing a communication plan which proposes to take a primarily digital approach (e.g., utilizing social media) to raise awareness among Ontarians about the Environmental Bill of Rights and how they can act on their rights under the act, while improving transparency in government decision-making.

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Value-for-Money Audit: Setting Indicators and Targets, and Monitoring Ontario's Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #1 To track performance, report on progress and drive continuous improvement toward environmental goals, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks establish and implement a process for developing comprehensive, outcome-based targets to meet the legislated and strategic goals and objectives within their areas of responsibility.	The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has developed a process to address its outcome-based targets through an ongoing comprehensive assessment of Key Performance Indicators and Program Level Performance Measures. This process will be implemented on an annual basis, will incorporate TBS guidance and is complemented by the establishment of Ministry roles and responsibilities. This process will begin implementation in the 1st quarter 2021/22.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and the importance of tracking performance, reporting on progress and driving continuous improvement toward environmental goals. The Ministry will use Treasury Board Secretariat guidance to develop outcome-based targets to achieve the Ministry's legislated and strategic goals and objectives. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will use Treasury Board Secretariat guidance on an ongoing basis to develop outcome-based targets to achieve the Ministry's legislated and strategic goals and objectives. The Ministry will assess Key Performance Indicators and Program level Performance Measures within 2 years, and on an annually basis from then on, to ensure Ministry legislated and strategic goals and objectives are being met.

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Value-for-Money Audit: Setting Indicators and Targets, and Monitoring Ontario's Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #2 So that key performance indicators are meaningful, transparent and effective at assessing progress toward environmental targets and goals, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • submit consistent, outcome-based key performance indicators to the Treasury Board Secretariat; and • include all approved key performance indicators and targets in their published annual plans.	The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has developed a process to address its outcome-based targets through an ongoing comprehensive assessment of Key Performance Indicators and Program Level Performance Measures. This process will be implemented on an annual basis, will incorporate TBS guidance material and is complemented by the establishment of Ministry roles and responsibilities. This process will begin implementation in the 1st quarter 2021/22.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation, and that key performance indicators should be meaningful, transparent and effective at assessing progress toward environmental targets and goals. The Ministry will continue to submit outcome-based indicators to the Treasury Board Secretariat consistent with its requirements. The Ministry will include approved key performance indicators and targets in its published annual plans, in alignment with direction provided by the Treasury Board Secretariat. Outstanding Undertaking: On an ongoing basis, the Ministry will provide advice, communicate Treasury Board Secretariat guidance on the development of key performance indicators. Building on the outcome-based indicators submitted through the 2021-22 MyP process, the ministry will continue to assess and submit indicators annually to the Treasury Board Secretariat consistent with its requirements. The Ministry will include approved key performance indicators and targets in its published annual plans within 2 years, in alignment with direction provided by the Treasury Board Secretariat.

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Value-for-Money Audit: Setting Indicators and Targets, and Monitoring Ontario's Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #3 So that the values used in water quality assessments are transparent and adequately substantiated, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks establish a documented process, similar to that used for air quality, for evaluating the use of assessment values from other jurisdictions and organizations where provincial values do not exist.	Project planning underway	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation, and that values in water quality assessment should be transparent and adequately substantiated. The Ministry will review how environmental benchmarks are documented and used across air and water programs and look for opportunities to enhance consistency. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will review how environmental benchmarks are documented and used across air and water programs and look for opportunities to enhance consistency within 1 year.
Recommendation #4 So that set targets are effective at driving and measuring progress toward science-based environmental goals, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks review their existing targets, and ensure that these and new targets have meaningful achievement-focused time frames and are based on sound, scientific evidence.	Project planning underway.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and that targets are important to measure progress toward science-based environmental goals and objectives. The Ministry will review the scientific basis and time frames of its existing environmental targets and consider the need for new targets based on scientific evidence, where appropriate. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will review the scientific basis and time frames of its existing environmental targets and consider the need for new targets based on scientific evidence, where appropriate within 2 years.

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Value-for-Money Audit: Setting Indicators and Targets, and Monitoring Ontario's Environment

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #5 So that staff are able to co-ordinate, collaborate and draw on information collected through monitoring programs within their own and the other two ministries, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • establish an internal means for sharing information on the objectives, activities and results of monitoring programs; and • require staff to keep the information up to date.	Exploration of opportunities with MNRF and OMAFRA for sharing information has been initiated. For example, between January and March 2021, MECP worked with MNRF to support updates to MNRF's Biodiversity Indicators reports including providing valuable monitoring data to inform the state of biodiversity. MECP will continue to seek opportunities to foster these collaborations.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and that the ability for staff to co-ordinate and collaborate on monitoring information from across the Ministry is important to facilitate knowledge sharing. The Ministry will explore additional opportunities for sharing up-to-date data and information on the objectives, activities and results of environmental monitoring programs, subject to the limitations of its current information technology and information systems. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will continue to explore additional opportunities for sharing up-to-date data and information on the objectives, activities and results of environmental monitoring programs, subject to the limitations of its current information technology and information systems. The Ministry will collaborate with OMAFRA and MNRF on opportunities to share monitoring program data between ministries within 2 years.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #7 For progress to be made on protecting and recovering species at risk, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • establish a database of actions contained in government response statements; • execute on high-priority actions to be taken, including monitoring; • solicit interest from and assign responsibility for certain actions to conservation partners (e.g., organizations, agencies, universities and other stakeholders); and • use the database to annually track and follow up on progress on actions.	Completed the 2021-2022 call for proposals, with a focus on implementing high-priority actions.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and will explore the feasibility of implementing processes and systems to enhance tracking progress and following up on actions identified in the government response statements. Protecting and recovering species at risk is a shared responsibility – that is why the Ministry will work with willing partners to implement high-priority actions. This includes implementing the Species at Risk Stewardship Program, through which the government is delivering up to \$4.5 million in 2020-21 to support projects by non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities and other stakeholder groups. Since 2007, Ontario has provided Species at Risk Stewardship Program funding for more than 1,100 projects, which have implemented on-the-ground recovery actions for nearly 200 species at risk; involved over 73,000 individuals who volunteered their time for the projects; contributed to the restoration of more than 54,000 hectares of habitat for species at risk; and provided species at risk information through their education and outreach activities to millions of people. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, 2007, the Ministry will continue to report on progress toward the protection and recovery of species at risk for species that have completed government response statements, including a summary of progress and actions toward meeting the recovery goal for the species. To date, Ontario has successfully reported on the progress toward the protection and recovery of 81 species at risk, and plans to develop and publish reports, in alignment with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act, 2007, on four additional species at risk in 2020 and 18 others in 2021. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and will explore the feasibility of implementing processes and systems to enhance tracking progress and following up on actions identified in the government response statements. Protecting and recovering species at risk is a shared responsibility – that is why the Ministry will work with willing partners to implement high-priority actions. This includes implementing the Species at Risk Stewardship Program, through which the government is delivering up to \$4.5 million in 2020-21 to support projects by non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities and other stakeholder groups. Since 2007, Ontario has

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
		provided Species at Risk Stewardship Program funding for more than 1,100 projects, which have implemented on-the-ground recovery actions for nearly 200 species at risk; involved over 73,000 individuals who volunteered their time for the projects; contributed to the restoration of more than 54,000 hectares of habitat for species at risk; and provided species at risk information through their education and outreach activities to millions of people. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, 2007, the Ministry will continue to report on progress toward the protection and recovery of species at risk for species that have completed government response statements, including a summary of progress and actions toward meeting the recovery goal for the species. To date, Ontario has successfully reported on the progress toward the protection and recovery of 81 species at risk, and plans to develop and publish reports, in alignment with the provisions of the Endangered Species Act, 2007, on four additional species at risk in 2020 and 18 others in 2021. The Ministry will explore the feasibility of implementing processes and systems to enhance tracking progress and following up on actions identified in the government response statements. The anticipated timeline for completion is the end of 2021. The Ministry will work with willing partners to implement high-priority actions, including implementing the Species at Risk Stewardship Program (SARSP), including evaluating SARSP applications received through 2021-22 call for proposals, focusing on high-priority actions.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #11 So that monitoring programs are credible, and collect standardized, comparable data that can reliably detect environmental changes over time, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks develop and implement requirements and processes for developing, reviewing and approving the content of standardized monitoring and survey protocols for all their monitoring programs.	The Ministry continues to review protocols from other jurisdictions and current scientific developments for application in Ontario. The Ministry will continue work to implement our monitoring and reporting programs to meet policy, program, reporting and compliance needs.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges the objective of this recommendation and the importance of detecting significant environmental changes over time. The Ministry, however, disagrees that the ability to detect environmental change over time can only be achieved by implementing standardized monitoring and survey protocols for all monitoring programs. The Ministry has specifically designed and continues to maintain and adapt its monitoring programs to ensure the ability to reliably detect significant changes over time and draw accurate conclusions. The Ministry will review material on establishing a process for documentation of its monitoring programs and implement where value is added in doing so. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges the objective of this recommendation and the importance of detecting significant environmental changes over time. The Ministry, however, disagrees that the ability to detect environmental change over time can only be achieved by implementing standardized monitoring and survey protocols for all monitoring programs. The Ministry has specifically designed and continues to maintain and adapt its monitoring programs to ensure the ability to reliably detect significant changes over time and draw accurate conclusions. The Ministry will review material on establishing a process for documentation of its monitoring programs and implement where value is added in doing so. The anticipated timeline for this is 2 years.

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Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #12 To assess the effectiveness of monitoring programs at achieving their stated objectives, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in adherence with guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat: • develop effective, program-specific performance measurement frameworks for all their monitoring programs; • establish and implement documented processes for regularly, independently and formally evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of their monitoring programs; and • periodically undertake a coordinated, comprehensive and independent evaluation of their environmental monitoring programs.	As part of the MECP process developed in response to recommendation 1, the Ministry is identifying priority areas where program level performance measures are required; to both support KPIs and to inform ongoing continuous program improvement. The establishment of program level performance measures will create a foundation for future program evaluation efforts.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation, and that performance measurement and evaluation are important to the strategic and sustainable operation of its monitoring programs. The Ministry will establish processes to develop program-specific performance measurement frameworks and evaluation plans, considering guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat. Framework implementation will be rolled out over time and will be subject to available resources. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry will establish processes to develop program-specific performance measurement frameworks and evaluation plans, considering guidance from the Treasury Board Secretariat. Framework implementation will be rolled out on a priority basis over time (3+ years) and will be subject to available resources. The Ministry will assess effectiveness of monitoring programs at achieving stated objectives on an annual basis.

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Auditor's Recommendation	Completed undertaking	Outstanding undertaking (including timeline)
Recommendation #13 To improve the integrity, security and effective use of data being used for monitoring purposes, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks: • implement a data management policy that outlines requirements for establishing data management plans; and • develop and implement data and information management plans for their monitoring programs.	In Q4 of 2020-21, the Ministry initiated development of a Digital Strategy which will incorporate data management plan requirements.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and will assess its current data and information management practices and develop options for a data management policy to address data from monitoring programs. When modernizing our legacy science information technology systems, we will document the associated data management plan. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and will assess its current data and information management practices and develop options for a data management policy to address data from monitoring programs (within 2 years). When modernizing our legacy science information technology systems, we will document the associated data management plan.
Recommendation #15 So that the public, researchers and interested stakeholders are able to make effective use of data collected through monitoring programs, we recommend that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks comply with the Open Data Directive and, unless exempted in specified circumstances, release data to the Ontario Data Catalogue in a timely manner.	The Ministry is complying with the Open Data Directive; for example, ESSD posted 16 datasets to the Ontario Data Catalogue in November/ December of 2020, including one new dataset.	Published Ministry Response to OAGO Recommendation: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and the importance of compliance with the Open Data Directive, so that public researchers and interested stakeholders can make effective use of data collected through the monitoring programs. The Ministry will work to ensure the timely release of its data, as appropriate. Outstanding Undertaking: The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks acknowledges this recommendation and the importance of compliance with the Open Data Directive, so that public researchers and interested stakeholders can make effective use of data collected through the monitoring programs. The Ministry will work to ensure the timely release of its data, as appropriate, on an ongoing basis.