

Douglas, Julia

From: Legislative Assembly of Ontario
Sent: December 1, 2020 11:54 AM
To: Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs
Cc: Teng, Deborah
Subject: Webform submission: Submission of material 28316

Submitted on Tue, 12/01/2020 - 11:48

Application ID: 28316

Submitted values are:

Bill or item of business: **Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020**

Choose a topic

Do you know the bill title or business (e.g., pre-budget consultations) you'd like to speak or submit material about?

Yes

Choose an application

Which application would you like to submit?

Submit material only

Which deadline would you like to submit your written material for?

[Written Submission Deadline: 7:00 p.m. \(EST\) on Wednesday, December 2, 2020](#)

Add your information

Are you submitting material as an individual or on behalf of an organization?

I am an employee or member submitting material on behalf of an organization

Full name

Dr Tom Woodcock

Job title or role

Planning Ecologist

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Province or state

ON

Country

Canada

Paste submission

The rare Charitable Research Reserve is a registered charity and land trust protecting and stewarding land in Ontario for the benefit of society. We believe that it is critical to recognize that a prosperous human society and functioning economy is dependent on properly functioning ecological systems. Human society draws on resources from the surrounding system, such as water, food, and energy, in order to function. It is important to note that we cannot create any of these products; we can only manage ecosystems, ultimately powered by the sun, in order to create them. Without exception an extensive land base is required, with providing ecological services such as nutrient management, atmospheric management, flood mitigation, and so forth. Using technology to replicate intact systems is difficult, expensive, and in some cases impossible. Therefore, it is a central responsibility of any government to ensure that these systems, which represent the capital of our life support system, are effectively managed, and not squandered for short-term gain.

The proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act in Ontario (Bill 229, Schedule 6) do not represent this type of effective management. Conservation Authorities are critical managers of natural systems, predominantly supporting water quality and hazard management associated with drainage, but also protecting natural habitats and other ecosystem services. Bypassing this regulatory framework and allowing access to our natural systems to private interests by ministerial fiat is unacceptable, showing a willingness to ignore informed and evidence-based management of our ecological capital for short-term gain. We request that the powers of Conservation Authorities to review and regulate planning matters in Ontario, using appropriate evidence-based methods, be restored. Furthermore, we request that the ability to override properly reviewed permits and environmental assessments by Ministerial Zoning Order be curtailed, and that the provincial government focus on developing an appropriate strategy to protect the natural resources and functions on which we depend.

Sincerely

Stephanie Sobek-Swant, Ph.D.

Executive Director

and

Thomas Woodcock, Ph.D.

Planning Ecologist

rare Charitable Research Reserve

