



*Conservation Ontario
Box 11, 120 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket, Ontario, L3Y 4W3
Phone: 905-895-0716*

October 15, 2001

The Honourable Dennis R. O'Connor, Commissioner
The Walkerton Inquiry
180 Dundas St. W., 22nd Floor
Toronto, ON
M5G 1Z8

Dear Justice O'Connor:

On behalf of Conservation Ontario, I am submitting a number of additional reports to assist you in your deliberations. Conservation Ontario has previously provided to the Walkerton Inquiry Office the following documents:

- *The Importance of Watershed Management in Protecting Ontario's Drinking Water Supplies* (Conservation Ontario, March 2001)
- Written Submissions for Public Hearings #1, #2 & 3, #4 and #5. Supplemental submissions documenting our input for Public Hearings #2 & 3 and #5 were provided as well.

Through the course of our involvement in the series of Expert Meetings and Public Hearings, Conservation Ontario was asked to provide some additional information. The attached reports are provided in this regard.

Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network – Review

During the public hearings process, you indicated an interest in receiving additional information/recommendations regarding the long term viability of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network. As the primary partner with the Ministry of the Environment in implementing this important initiative and by way of a mid-term review, Conservation Ontario has prepared the attached report. Conservation Ontario is committed to the success of this initiative and looks forward to resolving these concerns with the Minister of the Environment and appropriate Ministry staff. A provincial network to monitor the province's groundwater resources is necessary for understanding and managing Ontario's water resources and protecting Ontario's drinking water supplies.

The review of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network provides background on the initiative and the respective roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of the Environment and the Conservation Authorities. Short term and long term concerns and challenges are identified and recommendations are provided regarding the PGMN initiative. In addition, other groundwater management issues that affect the success of the network and the overall management of the groundwater resource are identified.

Managing the Environment: A Review of Best Practices (Executive Resource Group, January 2001) - Review

During the expert meeting phase of Part II, Ron Foerester indicated to Craig Mather (TRCA) an interest in receiving an assessment of the *Managing the Environment* report from a local agency perspective. The attached review focusses on the Executive Summary and provides comments on each of the Strategic Shifts and the Recommendations. In addition, a broad overview and conclusions are provided.

Overall, Conservation Ontario supports the implementation of this report and resultant adjustments suggested to increase the effectiveness of the Ministry of the Environment. The targeted recommendations forthcoming from your Inquiry to specifically protect drinking water will provide additional focus to the Province for implementing the *Managing the Environment* report.

Valuing Benefits from Watershed Management – Supplemental Report (October 2001)

During the expert meeting phase of Part II, James VanLoon in discussions with Dick Hunter (Conservation Ontario), Paul Emerson (Grand River CA) and Jim Anderson (Ducks Unlimited), indicated an interest in receiving additional information on the value (\$) of the benefits of watershed management. This information complements Conservation Ontario's earlier paper *The Importance of Watershed Management in Protecting Ontario's Drinking Water Supplies* (March 2001). The attached report provides a summary of evidence demonstrating the benefits from and values of watershed management. Case studies drawn from a variety of sources are used to illustrate the range and magnitude of values that are created by effective watershed management. The closing discussion highlights how benefit valuation can be used in watershed planning and management and in the development of sustainable funding formula for watershed management. The Appendix provides technical background on the methods used to value the benefits arising from watershed management and summarizes the findings of selected studies to value specific types of benefits.

Watershed Planning and Land Use Planning – Review

Through the public hearings phase of Part II, you have heard submissions from various parties on the relationship between watershed planning and land use planning. Conservation Authorities undertake various roles in support of the land use planning system with regard to their watershed jurisdiction and legislated mandate to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources. The land use planning system is a valuable tool in implementing watershed management actions for protecting water supplies.

As previously submitted, the requirement for watershed planning should be enshrined in legislation and one method of doing this is through the *Planning Act*. For your information, Conservation Ontario is making this point in its attached submission to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 5 Year Review. You may find the responses to the Stakeholder Questionnaire of interest in your deliberations; in particular, I direct your attention to Q1-1, Q1-2, Q2-1, Q4-1, Q4-2, Q5-1, and Q6-2. In addition, you may be interested in the various roles of CAs under the *Planning Act* as described in the Memorandum of Understanding attached to our PPS 5 Year Review submission.

Provincial standards need to be developed to guide the preparation of watershed plans. The standards should promote consistency while allowing enough flexibility so as not to limit innovation and to ensure the issues in a given watershed are addressed appropriately.

There are several triggers for watershed plans, in the case of land use change, provincial approval of a watershed plan or process is not necessary because the land use planning process already has provincial approval mechanisms (including audits) and processes for appeal (i.e. OMB).

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this important Inquiry. If you or your staff have any questions regarding our submissions, please contact Dick Hunter or Bonnie Fox at 905-895-0716. Conservation Ontario looks forward to your final report and recommendations to ensure the future security of drinking water in Ontario.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Krause', with a stylized, flowing script.

Peter Krause
Chair

Encl.

c.c. Dr. Harry Swain, The Walkerton Inquiry, Toronto
Mr. James VanLoon, The Walkerton Inquiry, Toronto
Mr. Ron Foerester, The Walkerton Inquiry, Toronto