

MUNICIPALITY OF MORRIS-TURNBERRY

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May 20, 2026

Please be advised that during the regular Council meeting of May 19, 2026, the following resolution regarding the proposed consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities and the future of funding for regional Conservation Authorities was passed by the Council of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry.

RESOLUTION: 99-2026

DATE: May 19, 2026

MOVED BY: Deputy Mayor Freiburger

SECONDED BY: Councillor Zinn

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario has announced its intention to consolidate Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities into 9 large regional entities;

AND WHEREAS this Council, municipalities, and Conservation Authorities across Ontario have expressed significant concerns regarding the proposed consolidation, including the absence of a demonstrated business case and a lack of evidence that consolidation will improve service delivery, efficiency, or environmental outcomes;

AND WHEREAS Conservation Authorities in Ontario were established on a watershed basis to provide locally informed, science-based management of natural resources, flooding, and erosion hazards;

AND WHEREAS the proposed consolidation will combine watersheds with significantly different characteristics, land uses, and environmental pressures into large regional entities, undermining the effectiveness of watershed-based decision-making;

AND WHEREAS Conservation Authorities play a critical role in protecting public safety through the regulation of development in areas prone to flooding and erosion, and weakening locally informed decision-making will increase risks to life and property;

AND WHEREAS the proposed governance model will reduce local municipal representation and diminish the voice of rural municipalities in decisions affecting their communities and watersheds;

AND WHEREAS there is broad concern among municipalities that the proposed changes do not reflect local priorities, knowledge, or the established partnership model between municipalities and the Province;

AND WHEREAS municipalities fund the majority of Conservation Authority operations, with provincial contributions generally representing only a small percentage ranging from approximately 2 to 8 percent, and therefore municipalities have a direct and substantial interest in the governance, structure, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability of the watershed-based Conservation Authority system;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario is advancing significant structural changes to the Conservation Authority system unilaterally, despite its limited contribution to Conservation Authority operational funding and without meaningful consultation or support from the municipalities that bear primary responsibility for funding these essential local services;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Morris-Turnberry strongly opposes the consolidation of Conservation Authorities in Ontario; and,

THAT Council affirms that locally governed, watershed-based Conservation Authorities remain the most effective model for protecting natural resources, managing natural hazards, and supporting safe, sustainable development in Ontario; and,

THAT Council calls upon the Province of Ontario to immediately halt the proposed consolidation process and recommit to strengthening the existing watershed-based Conservation Authority system, including through the provision of appropriate provincial funding, enhanced municipal collaboration and support, and improved communication and coordination among Conservation Authorities to advance more efficient permitting and greater standardization of systems and processes; and,

THAT if the Province proceeds with the consolidation without addressing the concerns of municipalities, Council will direct staff to review all available options with respect to the potential withholding or reallocation of municipal funding to any restructured regional Conservation Authority model; and,

THAT this resolution be circulated to the Office of the Premier of Ontario, the Honourable Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, the Honourable Lisa Thompson, the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Minister of the Environment, Climate Change and Nature, Member of Parliament Ben Lobb, and all Ontario municipalities for their consideration and support.

CARRIED.

Thank you,



Trevor Hallam
CAO/Clerk
Municipality of Morris-Turnberry