



LOWER TRENT
CONSERVATION

MEDIA RELEASE

Healthy Watersheds for Healthy Communities

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lower Trent Conservation Bracing for Impact Following 48% Cut in Provincial Funding

Provincial funding for critical conservation authority programs that warn people about flooding and protect property from costly damages has been reduced by almost half as a result of the 2019 Ontario Budget announced last week. The funding cuts are effective immediately.

Using a watershed-based approach, Lower Trent Conservation delivers effective and cost efficient flood management programs across the Lower Trent watershed region. The majority of the organization's flood management programs have traditionally been funded through partnerships with the Province and local municipalities.

"Specific impacts on our organization, and the community at large, as a result of the provincial funding cut remains to be seen," says Glenda Rodgers, Lower Trent Conservation CAO. "We just learned about this on Friday, and have yet to discuss with our Board of Directors. What we know for certain is that this reduction to funding is of significant concern, particularly for smaller and more rural conservation authorities like ours. While our geographic jurisdiction is quite large (2,070 square kilometres), our small-sized municipalities have limited financial resources, so we rely on provincial funding to help maintain delivery of our flood management programs."

Conservation Authorities have a variety of responsibilities around flood management in Ontario. These include:

- Forecast flooding and issue warnings
- Monitor streamflow, rainfall and snow packs
- Floodplain mapping
- Manage and operate \$2.7 billion in flood infrastructure such as dams and dykes
- Provide planning support and advice to the Province, municipalities and the federal government to minimize flood impacts
- Regulate development activities in floodplains
- Contribute to municipal emergency planning and preparedness activities as well as recovery activities
- Inform and educate the public about flooding
- Protect, restore and rehabilitate natural cover that contributes to reducing the impacts of flooding

"With the impacts of climate change leading to bigger, more frequent flooding events, this reduction from

\$133,329 to \$68,830 in natural hazards funding is going to be particularly challenging for us,” adds Rodgers. “In addition to the funding cut, the Province has proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act which may bring about changes to the programs we deliver and how we raise funds to support them - an added concern, as we strive to uphold the high standards of service our watershed community has come to rely on and appreciate.”

Lower Trent Conservation is a community-based, non-profit, registered charitable environmental protection organization that protects, restores and manages the natural resources within the Lower Trent watershed region. For more information on Lower Trent Conservation, please visit LTC.on.ca.

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