


What's Cooking?
The ECO's perspective on Climate Change



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Carolinian Canada Coalition



Carolinian Canada Coalition



Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO)

- legislative oversight agency
- reviews, reports on environmental decision-making
- created by the Environmental Bill of Rights (*EBR*)
- annual reports to MPPs and public

Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

- Officer of Legislative Assembly
- Independent, impartial
- Appointed by the Legislature
- 5-year term
- www.eco.on.ca



Gord Miller
 Environmental Commissioner

ECO observation on climate change: 2002

- Climate Change: Is the Science Sound?

(ECO Special Report, Nov. 2002)

ECO observation on climate change: 2002

- Climate Change:
Is the Science Sound?

(ECO Special Report, Nov. 2002)

YES!

ECO observation on climate change: 2004/2005

- Ontario's approach to climate change remains low-key:
 - No formal, regular meetings
 - No timelines
 - No lead ministry

ECO observation on climate change: 2004/2005

The ECO recommends that the government expressly identify a lead ministry so that a provincial strategy can be prepared to help meet Canada's climate change obligations, and that the ministry be provided with adequate resources.



Related observations: 2004/2005



How is Ontario managing our urban forests?

Urban Forests:

ECO comments 2004/2005

- our urban forests are aging
- MNR has very few staff with urban forestry expertise
- MNR no longer running its own nurseries
- invasive species; reliance on federal agencies, e.g., CFIA, EC

ECO asked in 2005/2006:

What is the status of Ontario's adaptation strategy?

status of Ontario's adaptation strategy? 2005/2006

- study, then wait and see
- little evidence that codes, policies and standards are being adjusted
- distinct lack of leadership at MOE
- MNR's impressive and growing list of research publications on climate change; also involved in C-CIARN

Related observations: 2005/2006

How is Ontario doing on land acquisitions?



Status of Ontario's land acquisitions programs:

- budget frozen for past decade (\$5-6 million/year)
- meanwhile, farmland doubled in value from 1995-2005
- a variety of programs, with shifting criteria and areas of eligibility

ECO Special Report April 2007

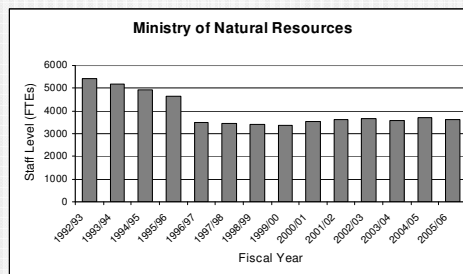
Doing Less with Less:

How shortfalls in budget, staffing and in-house expertise are hampering the effectiveness of MOE and MNR

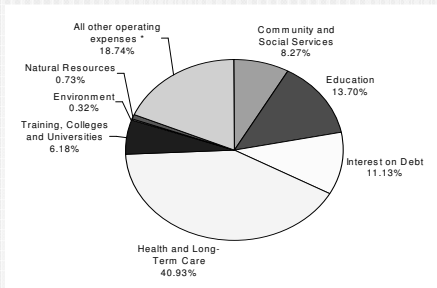
Doing Less with Less

- operational budgets of MOE, MNR are less than in 1992, in real dollars
- but their mandates have expanded greatly since 1992
- spending on environmental protection has declined on a per-person basis

MNR staff levels 92/93 to 2005/06, measured in full-time equivalents



Planned 2006/2007 Ontario Government operating budget (\$84.7 billion)



Doing Less with Less

- MNR has limited capacity to monitor fish and wildlife species
- reliance on third parties



Doing Less with Less

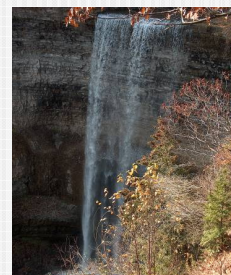
Two conservation officers are responsible for Lake Ontario's sport and commercial fisheries

(Including Niagara River and the St. Lawrence to the Quebec border)



Doing Less with Less

- MNR parks planning, monitoring and maintenance are all areas of concern
- only 40% of provincial parks have approved management plans

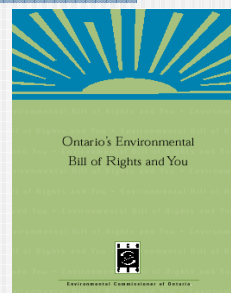


Climate Change: new Ontario initiatives

- Expert Committee on Climate Change Adaptation (announced July 19, 2007)
- targets to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions below 1990 levels: 6% by 2014; 15% by 2020; 80% by 2050 (announced June 2007)
- ECO to review, report progress on emission reductions (announced June 18, 2007)

Implications for Carolinian Canada Coalition

- you can use your EBR rights



Your *EBR* Rights

Notice – The public is notified of environmentally significant initiatives on the Environmental Registry:
www.ene.gov.on.ca

Comment – The public has the right to comment on proposals for environmentally significant Acts, regulations, policies, and instruments

Your *EBR* Rights

Reviews – You can ask a minister to review *existing* policies and prescribed Acts, regulations, and instruments, or, to review the need for *new* Acts, regulations and policies.

EBR applications have helped bring about:

- The Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Act
- New Parks and Protected Areas legislation
- New Endangered Species legislation

Implications for Carolinian Canada Coalition

- use your EBR rights
- find joint solutions
- let the networking begin!



THANK YOU!



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