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**To: UTRCA Board of Directors**  
**From: Tracy Annett, General Manager**  
**Date: January 27, 2026**  
**File Number: BoD-26-01-10**  
**Agenda #: 8.4**  
**Subject: Responses and Communications - Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities**

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## Recommendation

To provide the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) Board of Directors with an overview of responses received by the UTRCA and across the province related to Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) 025-1257: *Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities.*

## Background

The UTRCA provided information on the provincial proposal directly to member municipalities and other watershed partners, as well as posting information online for the public:

- Developed municipal fact sheet and provided it to member municipalities with an example of a municipal resolution,
- Developed fact sheet for other interest-holders and emailed it to partners,
- Developed web page (<https://thamesriver.on.ca/ca-changes/>) with resources:
  - Municipal factsheet – Conservation Authorities Consolidation,
  - Partners factsheet – Conservation Authorities Consolidation,
  - UTRCA Board of Directors Motion regarding Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities (November 25, 2025),
  - Board report – Provincial Announcements: Bill 68 and ERO Posting (November 25, 2025),
  - Board report – Comments on Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Provincial Conservation Authorities, ERO #025-1257 (December 16, 2025),
- Provided information through 16 posts on UTRCA social media:
  - Total number of Facebook views: 143,716,
  - Total number of Instagram views: 18,527.

The UTRCA General Manager also joined other Lake Erie region General Managers at a meeting organized by local First Nations.

## Responses and Submissions

### Municipal Responses

As directed by the Board, the UTRCA provided member municipalities with the UTRCA Board's resolution and an example of a municipal resolution highlighting concerns with

ERO 025-1257. Table 1 summarizes the UTRCA municipalities' responses, noting those that passed a resolution expressing concerns with the Province's proposal.

**Table 1. Summary of UTRCA municipality responses**

<b>Member Municipalities and Counties</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>
Oxford County	Resolution passed December 10 and staff prepared comments for the ERO.
South-West Oxford	December 2 directed staff to write a letter expressing concerns regarding the proposed amalgamation of the 36 Conservation Authorities in the Province of Ontario.
Norwich	No resolution.
Ingersoll	Resolution passed December 8.
Zorra	Resolution passed December 17.
Woodstock	Resolution passed December 11.
East-Zorra Tavistock	Resolution passed December 17.
Blandford-Blenheim	Resolutions (UTRCA and GRCA) passed December 17.
Perth County	Resolution passed December 11.
West Perth	Resolution passed December 1.
Perth South	Resolution not considered at meeting December 16.
Perth East	Discussed resolution at meeting December 16 but motion to send resolution was not carried.
Stratford	Did not have a second council meeting in December to consider. Resolution passed January 12 (after ERO deadline).
St. Marys	Considered on January 13 but did not support the resolution. Liked the idea of having consistency across the province and will wait for more information regarding the proposed regulations to determine any action.
South Huron	Resolutions passed December 15 supporting Kingsville resolution and then ABCA and UTRCA-specific resolutions.
Middlesex County	Requested staff to submit comments to the ERO in December.
Middlesex Centre	Resolution passed December 17 and ERO comments submitted.
Thames Centre	Resolution passed December 8.
Lucan Biddulph	Resolution passed December 16.
London	Resolution not supported December 16. Mayor Morgan had a neutral position and committed to meet with UTRCA area mayors affected by the consolidation to discuss impacts. Meeting with mayors on January 16.

Conservation Ontario (CO) is tracking submissions from municipalities across Ontario, based on information conservation authorities are providing to CO (Table 2).

**Table 2. Conservation Ontario summary of responses from municipalities as of January 15, 2026**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>File Type</b>	<b>Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?</b>
Township of Adjala-Tosorontio	Resolution	No
Township of Alfred and Plantagenet	Resolution	No
Township of Amaranth	Resolution	No
Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Resolution	No
Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh	Resolution	No
Township of Augusta	Resolution	No
City of Belleville	Resolution	No
Township of Blandford-Blenheim	Resolution	No
Town of the Blue Mountains	Resolution	No
Municipality of Bluewater	Resolution	No
City of Brampton	Letter	No
Municipality of Brighton	Resolution	No
City of Brantford	Resolution	No
Municipality of Casselman	Resolution	No
Municipality of Central Elgin	Resolution	No
Township of Central Frontenac	Resolution	No
Municipality of Centre Hastings	Resolution	No
Municipality of Chatham-Kent	Resolution	No
Township of Chatsworth	Resolution	No
City of Clarence-Rockland	Resolution	No
Town of Cobourg	Resolution	No
Town of Collingwood	Resolution	No
Township of Conmee	Resolution	No
Township of Cramahe	Resolution	No
Town of Deseronto	Resolution	No
Township of Dorion	Resolution	No
Township of Drummond/ North Elmsley	Resolution	No
Municipality of Dutton-Dunwich	Resolution	No
Township of East-Zorra Tavistock	Resolution	No
Town of Edwardsburgh Cardinal	Resolution	No
County of Essex	Resolution	No
Town of Essex	Resolution	No
Township of Georgian Bluffs	Resolution	No
Town of Goderich	Letter	No
Town of Grand Valley	Resolution	No

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>File Type</b>	<b>Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?</b>
City of Greater Sudbury	Resolution	No
County of Grey	Resolution	No
Municipality of Grey Highlands	Resolution	No
City of Guelph	Resolution	No
Haldimand County	Resolution	No
Halton Region	Letter	Neutral
City of Hamilton	Resolution	No
Township of Hamilton	Resolution	No
Township of Huron East	Resolution	No
Town of Ingersoll	Resolution	No
City of Kawartha Lakes	Resolution	No
City of Kingston	Resolution	No
Town of Kingsville	Resolution	No
Municipality of Lakeshore	Letter	No
Town of Lasalle	Resolution	No
Municipality of Leamington	Resolution	No
City of London	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Lucan-Biddulph	Resolution	No
Township of Malahide	Resolution	No
Municipality of Meaford	Resolution	No
Township of Melancthon	Resolution	No
County of Middlesex	Resolution	No
Municipality of Middlesex Centre	Resolution	No
City of Mississauga	Letter	No
Town of Mono	Resolution, letter	No
Township of Mulmur	Resolution	No
The Nation Municipality	Resolution	No
Municipality of Neebing	Resolution	No
Region of Niagara	Resolution	No
Township of North Dundas	Resolution	No
Township of North Frontenac	Resolution	No
Township of North Glengarry	Resolution	No
Municipality of North Grenville	Resolution	No
Township of Norwich	No resolution	--
Town of Oakville	Letter	No
Township of O'Connor	Resolution	No
Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge	Resolution	No
Township of Oro-Medonte	Resolution	Partial
City of Ottawa	Resolution	No

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>File Type</b>	<b>Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?</b>
City of Owen Sound	Resolution	No
County of Oxford	Resolution	No
Region of Peel	Report	No
County of Perth	Resolution	No
Town of Perth	Resolution	No
Township of Perth East	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Perth South	Resolution not considered	--
Town of Petrolia	Letter	Yes
Municipality of Port Hope	Resolution	No
Town of Plympton-Wyoming	Resolution	No
United Counties of Prescott Russell	Resolution	No
Township of Rideau Lakes	Resolution	No
Township of Russell	Resolution	No
City of Sault Ste. Marie	Resolution	No
Township of Scugog	Resolution	No
Municipality of Shuniah	Resolution	No
Town of Smiths Falls	Resolution	No
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	Resolution	No
Municipality of South Dundas	Resolution	No
Township of South Frontenac	Resolution	No
Municipality of South Huron	Resolution	No
Township of South Stormont	Resolution	No
Township of South-West Oxford	Resolution	No
Town of St. Marys	Resolution did not pass	--
Township of Southgate	Resolution	No
Township of Southwold	Resolution	No
Township of Stirling-Rawdon	Resolution	No
United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Resolution	No
City of Stratford (after ERO deadline)	Resolution	No
Township of Tay	Resolution	No
Township of Tay Valley	Resolution	No
Town of Tecumseh	Resolution	No
Municipality of Thames Centre	Resolution	No
Township of Tyendinaga	Resolution	No
City of Thunder Bay	Resolution	No
City of Timmins	Resolution	No
Township of Tudor and Cashel	Resolution	No
Municipality of Tweed	Resolution	No

Municipality	File Type	Supportive of Proposed Consolidation?
Municipality of West Perth	Resolution	No
Village of Westport	Resolution	No
City of Windsor	Resolution	No
City of Woodstock	Resolution	No
Township of Zorra	Resolution	No

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) submitted four recommendations to the Province on the proposal. AMO urged the Province to:

- Maintain and prioritize local governance, expertise, and decision making in CA consolidation,
- Fund transition costs to mitigate service delivery impacts,
- Restore a 50-50 municipal funding partnership that reflects increased provincial authority over CA operations, and potentially its fees, and
- Establish an implementation working group to develop options that would deliver on the province’s consolidation objectives while protecting local decision making and municipal fiscal sustainability.

The [Association of Municipalities of Ontario submission](#) is available online. A joint letter from AMO and Conservation Ontario to Minister McCarthy is attached to this report.

### Other Responses and Submissions

At the December 12, 2025, regional meeting for CAs and municipalities it was reported by provincial staff that more than 2,500 responses had been received to date. Until the Province reviews, approves, and posts the comments submitted to the ERO, it is not possible to accurately report on the quantity and tone of the public responses.

Many organizations submitted comments to the ERO expressing general support of the Province’s objectives but opposition to the proposed large-scale consolidations that would undermine local conservation delivery of programs and services. The [Ontario Federation of Agriculture’s submission](#) supports consistent standards and approaches but raises concerns that the proposed seven large regional CAs are too geographically expansive to reflect local watershed and agricultural realities. Other examples include:

- [Wildlife Conservation Society of Canada submission](#),
- [Canadian Environmental Law Association submission](#),
- [Ontario Nature submission](#) on behalf of 94 environmental organizations,
- [Ontario Society of Professional Engineers submission](#)
- [A joint letter from 74 former CA/Ministry staff](#),
- The Ontario Mutual Insurance Association submission (attached).

### Summary

Although the ERO posting is closed, the UTRCA continues to receive questions and comments from watershed residents. Municipal communications are ongoing; the UTRCA Chair and Vice Chair attended a meeting arranged by Mayor Morgan for Mayors and Wardens on January 16. Given the volume of feedback and the consistent

messages from CAs and municipalities, the hope is that further consultation and engagement will take place during the legislative break. Future reports will be provided to the Board as updates are available.

**Recommended by:**

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**Prepared by:**

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Eleanor Heagy, Coordinator, Marketing and Communications

**Attachments:**

- Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Conservation Ontario Joint Response to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks,
- Ontario Mutual Insurance Association submission.