



April, 2018

Questions for Candidates in the 2018 Ontario Provincial Election  
Riding of: Haliburton – Kawartha Lakes – Brock  
Riding of: Peterborough - Kawartha

Issues for Voters in the Upper Trent River Watershed as Identified by CEWF

The Coalition for Equitable Water Flow (CEWF) was formed in August 2006 to represent the interests of the more than 30,000 Ontario taxpayers who own residential shoreline property on the 35 reservoir lakes and 20 flow-through lakes within the Upper Trent River watershed located in Haliburton and northern Peterborough counties. With 32 member-lake-associations, the Coalition represents the interests of lake communities contributing over 90% of the Trent-Severn Waterway (TSW) reservoir storage capacity.

Three levels of government share responsibility for a range of issues facing shoreline property owners in the upper Trent watershed, with no single level of government taking a clear leadership role – making it difficult for voters to get clear commitments from government – but equally important for all levels of government to be engaged and to work together.

The federal government through Parks Canada and the TSW is currently responsible for the operation and maintenance of the waterway (canal) system as well as water management policy for the watershed.

The Ontario government's responsibilities include the development of policies relating to climate change as well as integrated watershed management through conservation authorities – where these exist.

At the county and municipal level, local governments are on the front line with regard to the protection of local infrastructure from climate change and extreme weather events. With that in mind, in 2016 CEWF, with support from the County of Haliburton, formed the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership (UTWMP) to advance the concept of integrated water management for the benefit of all communities in the Trent watershed. The partnership aims to engage in a consultation process that includes Parks Canada, the four southern conservation authorities and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF). (The Partnership members include the Township of Algonquin Highlands, the Municipality of Dysart et.al., the Township of Minden Hills, the Municipality of Highlands East, located in Haliburton County; as well as the Township of North Kawartha, the Municipality of Trent Lakes, located in northern Peterborough County: and and the Coalition for Equitable Water Flow (CEWF)).

Despite the active engagement of federal and municipal levels of government, the Ontario government has been largely absent from public discussions affecting water management of the Trent watershed despite having significant social and economic interests in the region. This lack of attention is further compounded by the fact that most of the upper Trent watershed lacks a conservation authority to monitor and advise on watershed conditions.

The Coalition believes there is an immediate opportunity for the Province to take action with regard to:

- Recognizing the need to contribute knowledge and expertise in response to the challenges posed by climate change and extreme weather events, such as flooding and drought;
- Renewing the expired 2011 Memorandum of Understanding between Parks Canada and Ontario regarding enhanced cooperation and collaboration in the future management of the TSW and its watersheds (Ontario let the MOU lapse and has so far shown no interest in renewing it);
- Having MNRF clarify trout-lake designations so that the TSW is able to achieve a better balance between the competing requirements of maintaining safe navigation while also protecting trout spawning beds when managing water levels on the reservoir lakes.

CEWF encourages voters to raise the following questions with candidates.

### **Questions from the Coalition**

1. Climate change has led to an increasing number of extreme weather events in the Upper Trent Watershed. These include severe flooding in 2013 and 2017, as well as drought conditions in 2016.

***What do you believe the government of Ontario needs to do to better protect public and private infrastructure in the upper Trent watershed from climate-change-related flooding? For example, would you support funding for local flood-plain mapping and flood mitigation strategies, including improved building code regulations?***

2. Given the lack of a conservation authority covering the Upper Trent Watershed, Ontario needs to step-up its efforts in support of integrated water management at the watershed level by working with the TSW to support initiatives relating to planning, conservation and economic development.

***Do you support renewal of the 2011 Memorandum of Understanding between Ontario and Parks Canada, which Ontario allowed to expire in 2016, regarding enhanced cooperation and collaboration in the future management of the TSW and its watersheds?***

3. The economic well-being of the municipalities in the Upper Trent Watershed is largely dependent on its waterfront property owners and its lake communities.

***Are you in favour of a renewed emphasis on water conservation to support recreational use of the reservoir lakes and improve fish habitat, while also maintaining navigation on the canal portion of the Trent-Severn Waterway? Accordingly, would you support funding to allow MNRF to provide definitive lake-specific data with regard to the location and depth of trout spawning beds on the reservoir and flow-through lakes in the Upper Trent watershed?***