Background

WaterScape held 6 meetings with about 150 participants in February 2018 – delivered through a partnership of three provincial organizations and 11 regional groups - on a government initiative to potentially expand the Greenbelt called Protecting Water for Future Generations (PWFG).

In addition to addressing the prospect of growing the Greenbelt, PWFG asked a question about how else the government might protect water. That question opened the door to broad issues of keen interest to many of the WaterScape participants, including areas in land use planning, watershed management, biodiversity, climate change, and public health in Ontario.

Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of this survey is to touch base with past participants, as well as other organizations, to assess interests touched on in PWFG and that remain today.

As provincial direction changed following the election of June 7, 2018 from when the WaterScape meetings had been held the previous February, we have done our best to bridge the key takeaways from WaterScape with the more recent initiatives of the current government.

Papers Related to WaterScape

A super-condensed summary of WaterScape can be found immediately below. If you wish, you can also read the full Proceedings and/or the 17 recommendations endorsed by more than 140 signatories in the joint Submission.
Condensed Summary of the Regional Meetings

Peel/ Dufferin: Aggregates trump water and producers have uneven access to decision-makers. Better integrated planning, with more support for natural heritage and sustainable agriculture, is needed.

Durham: Fill must be regulated and tested and agricultural lands preserved. Better integration for planning and enforcement, and more supervisory bodies similar to the Niagara Escarpment Commission, are needed.

Simcoe: PWFG takes too narrow a geographic and policy focus with problematic mapping. Greenbelt lands are needed in Simcoe. Municipalities need financial support. Boil water advisories must be addressed.

Brant: Poor planning, industrial farming, aggregates, and biosolid applications to land are impacting natural heritage and water. Greenbelting the Grand River watershed in Brant County held strong support.

Niagara: The study areas excluded moraines in Niagara that should be added, as well as connecting areas from a recent study. In addition to greenbelting, Niagara needs strong provincial policies and oversight.

Peterborough: PWFG talks systems but does not walk the talk. Local greenbelting to counter development targets in the Growth Plan is needed. Provincial oversight is needed. End boil water advisories.

Thematic Observations that Contributed to the Submission

Protecting Water

- There was unanimous agreement at all meetings that the Province is not doing enough to protect water in the Greenbelt and indeed across Ontario.
- While it is clear that the Greenbelt provides some additional protection to water, participants noted that:
  - The added protective measures in the Greenbelt do not go far enough;
  - Water should be better protected in a comprehensive manner that includes natural heritage across the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH), and not just in the Greenbelt;
  - Water must be better protected in many areas outside of the GGH, such as the Ring of Fire;
  - Water conservation must be more aggressively pursued; and
- Protecting Water for Future Generations (PWFG) needs to embrace an overarching government commitment to end the conditions causing boil water advisories.

**Expanding the Greenbelt**
- In spite of significant concerns related to mapping data and consultation efforts, there was consensus at all meetings that the proposed study areas should be considered for addition to the Greenbelt.
- There was also consensus for further expansion of the study areas under consideration to include significant lands in Brant, Niagara, Simcoe, and Peterborough, not all of which should have to be contiguous to the existing Greenbelt, as well as in areas identified by the Bluebelt proposal from the Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership.

**Agriculture**
- There was unanimous support for agriculture at the meetings, as well as concerns that agricultural impacts on water are not being recognized. Expanded seasons, alterations from historic water budgets, industrial framing, under-regulated use of fertilizers and pesticides, and the use sewage sludge were cited as concerns, as was needed support for organic farming and more sustainable practices.

**Implementation**
- The Province needs to support regional planning and provide oversight when municipalities fail to give due consideration to the protection of natural heritage and water.
- Conservation authorities need greater regulatory authority and there must be better inter-agency collaboration on implementation, monitoring, and enforcement.
WaterScape Sustainable Planning Needs Assessment Survey

All responses will be kept confidential. Please note that the request below for your e-mail address is merely for you to obtain a copy of your responses: the organizers of this survey will not see your address and therefore cannot associate you with your responses.

A. General Information

Please share a bit of information about yourself or your organization.

1. I am participating in this survey:
   - As an individual
   - Representing the views of an organization

2. I / my organization participated in WaterScape in 2018 and/or endorsed the submission.
   - Yes
   - No

B. Land Use Planning, Watershed Management, and Climate Change

3. Do you support the identification and protection of areas of ecological and hydrological significance as a key element in a framework approach to land use planning?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Unsure / No opinion

4. Do you think that Ontario does enough to protect Ontario’s natural heritage, inland waters, and prime agricultural lands?
   - Yes
   - No
   - Unsure / No opinion
5. If the framework approach mentioned above identifies habitats of ecological and hydrological significance in areas experiencing increasing development, would you support their inclusion in a Greenbelt or similar special planning area?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Unsure / No opinion

6. Do you think the Province is doing enough to regulate and monitor the placement of fill (excess soil from excavation/construction sites) on third party lands?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Unsure / No opinion

7. Current practices allow the application of raw sewage and bio-solids on third party land, particularly agricultural lands. Do you think the Province is adequately safeguarding land and water with respect to these applications?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Unsure / No opinion

8. Do you agree that using the watershed as the “ecologically meaningful scale for planning”, as described in the Provincial Policy Statement, should be retained in forthcoming amendments to the Statement?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Unsure / No opinion

9. A recent amendment to the Conservation Authorities Act deleted their historic role for the conservation of natural resources and watershed management from their core mandate. Do you agree with this revised mandate?

○ Yes
○ No
○ Unsure / No opinion
10. In the housing action plan, Ontario has announced that it will be developing a provincial regulation to replace certain development guidelines in each of the province’s 36 conservation authorities. Do you see a need for public participation in the granting of permits under this proposed provincial regulation?

11. For the same anticipated regulation as described in question 9, do you see a need for provincial oversight and/or an appeal process for permits granted under this new regulation?

12. Do you agree that the potential for increased flooding as Ontario’s climate changes needs to be addressed through a sustainability lens that includes both watershed-wide forests and wetlands?

13. Do you agree that Ontario should transition its existing systems-based approaches for land use planning and watershed management to embrace Integrated Watershed Management, incorporating inter-agency collaboration and cumulative monitoring while also including considerations for biodiversity, climate change, and public health?

C. Water Quality and Public Health

14. Do you perceive a need for increased provincial involvement in efforts to eliminate boil water advisories and persistent drinking water quality problems across Ontario?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion
15. Do you support the expansion of drinking water source protection to areas not yet implemented under the **Clean Water Act, 2006**?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

16. Do you support the implementation of the municipal water sustainability plans, targets, and performance indicators as described but not established under the **Water Opportunities Act, 2010**?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

17. Do you support increased efforts by the Province to better protect water quality by lowering the releases of carcinogens, other toxic chemicals (persistent, bio-accumulative, and endocrine disrupting substances), excess nutrients, and the release of raw or inadequately treated sewage from industrial, agricultural, and municipal sources?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

18. Do you support a requirement for public notification of sewage spills, including combined sewage overflow (CSO) events, in all municipalities?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion
D. Natural Heritage, Biodiversity, Endangered Species, Agriculture, & Aggregates

19. Do you think that Ontario should develop a provincial document similar to the federal guideline *How Much Habitat is Enough* in order to establish targets to protect the ecological and hydrological integrity of Ontario’s watersheds?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

20. Do you think the Province is doing enough for biodiversity, such as protecting 17% of Ontario’s lands and fresh waters in accordance with Canada’s commitment under the Convention on Biological Diversity, protecting and restoring wetlands, and taking action against invasive species?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

21. Do you agree with the direction of changes to the *Endangered Species Act*, and in particular the provision allowing development applicants to pay a fee rather than implement measures to protect an endangered species?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

22. Are you concerned about the reduction of environmental permitting and oversight in the aggregate review, as well as the absence of meaningful public consultation on this file? Do you support the expansion of provincial efforts to support local food initiatives, a transition toward sustainable agriculture, and an on-going role for family farms?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure / No opinion

23. Do you support the expansion of provincial efforts to help transition Ontario toward sustainable agriculture, including support for local food, family farming, best
management practices to reduce the impact of agriculture on receiving waters, and tax credits for areas such as wetlands or other areas in natural heritage?

24. Do you support the expansion of provincial efforts to support local food initiatives, a transition toward sustainable agriculture, and an on-going role for family farms?

E. Protecting and Expanding the Greenbelt

25. Do you support efforts to add areas to the Greenbelt based on Recommendation 71 in Planning for Health, Prosperity and Growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe: 2015-2041, including important surface water areas, key headwater areas, groundwater recharge areas, highly vulnerable aquifers, and areas where stress on groundwater is evident?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion

26. Do you support the designation of new greenbelt lands that are not contiguous to the existing Greenbelt?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion

27. Do you support the addition of the Bluebelt, as proposed by the Oak Ridges Moraine Partnership, to the Greenbelt?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion
28. Do you support public consultation on expanding the Greenbelt and/or extending some of its enhanced aspects of environmental protection to other areas of Ontario, such as across the Greater Golden Horseshoe and in the Ring of Fire?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion

29. Do you have confidence in the Province’s commitment to protect the Greenbelt?

![Confidence Scale]

F. A Final Question

30. The Ontario Headwaters Institute has applied for funding to build WaterScape into an on-going collaborative effort. If we obtain the funding, would you be interested in participating in such an effort?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure / No opinion