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Province Donates Eramosa Karst Lands McGuinty government expanding protected greenspace in Hamilton



Left to right: David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal and Jennifer Mossop, MPP for Stoney Creek transfer title to the Eramosa Karst lands to Chris Firth-Eagland, Chair of the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

HAMILTON—The McGuinty government is donating more than 180 acres of provincially significant natural heritage land to the Hamilton Conservation Authority to create Hamilton's newest conservation area, David Caplan, Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal, announced today.

"This land transfer supports our government's plan to increase parkland and protected natural areas across the province," said Caplan. "This property is particularly important because its unique geological features are considered provincially significant - caves, dry valleys, sinking streams and overflow sinks - not found in any other parkland areas in

Ontario."

The Eramosa Karst, located in the former City of Stoney Creek, is a limestone geological formation that was designated in 2003 by the Ministry of Natural Resources as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. It is believed to contain the largest number of karst features in the most compact area in the province. Karsts are geological formations, including underground drainage, caves and passages, caused by dissolving rock found in limestone formations.

"Protecting the Eramosa Karst land will provide scientists, students and naturalists with unique and valuable learning opportunities for years to come," said Jennifer Mossop, MPP for Stoney Creek. "By preserving natural areas, we are also contributing to cleaner air and water, which is a critical step toward sustaining the high quality of life enjoyed by residents of our community and other communities across Ontario."

Today's announcement reinforces the government's commitment to planned growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which is the fastest-growing region in Canada. A key component of the province's plan is preserving environmentally sensitive land in the province. This is just one of the ways the McGuinty government is on the side of Ontario families. Other initiatives include:

- Creating Ontario's Greenbelt, which protects 1.8 million acres of greenspace for families to enjoy for years to come

- Fighting air pollution by closing the coal-fired Lakeview Generating Station - the equivalent of removing 500,000 cars from the roads
- Protecting 650 acres of ecologically significant lands to preserve green space and curb urban sprawl in the Town of Oakville.

"It's a distinct pleasure for us to have the opportunity to include the Eramosa Karst in our conservation plans for the region," said Chris Firth-Eagland, chair of the conservation authority. "Along with the educational opportunities offered by the karst, we're developing even more new parklands and trail systems to link it with the Mount Albion and Felker's Falls conservation areas."

"This government is committed to protecting Ontario's natural heritage through strategies such as the Natural Spaces program, which is helping private landowners and conservation organizations conserve and restore a healthy and diverse system of natural areas across southern Ontario," said Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay.

"Protecting the exceptional features of the Eramosa Karst is another step towards ensuring that future generations can enjoy clean air and water, abundant natural spaces, plentiful habitat for wildlife, and all the benefits of a healthy, natural environment."

The Eramosa Karst is a key element of the Hamilton East-end Open Space Replacement Strategy, developed by the Hamilton Conservation Authority in partnership with the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce.

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