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October 17, 2024

Honourable Graydon Smith, MPP  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Whitney Block, 99 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3

By email: [minister.mnrf@ontario.ca](mailto:minister.mnrf@ontario.ca)

Dear Minister Smith:

The General Membership of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) requests that the freeze to Conservation Authority fees associated with planning, development, and permitting be lifted as of December 31, 2024.

The inability of the GRCA to increase fees to partially offset program and delivery costs requires greater reliance on municipal apportionment. The GRCA undertook a Program Rates and User Fee Review completed by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd. on October 12, 2023, and has been unable to implement any of the recommendations as a result of the fee freeze.

Conservation Authorities are partners in ensuring that development can happen in a timely, safe manner. We support Conservation Authorities, particularly the Grand River Conservation Authority, partially offsetting program costs through user fees and request that you grant us the ability to do so. Failing that, we ask that the Ministry allow Conservation Authorities to apply a cost-of-living increase to 2024 fees for the following budget year or provide additional funding through the transfer payments to Conservation Authorities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Chris White".

Chris White, Chair