



## **Media Release**

### Celebrating 25 years of Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights

**February 15, 2019, TORONTO** – Today marks the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR). This law, unique in Canada, gives Ontarians the right to [participate in environmentally significant decisions](#) of the provincial government. Its tools provide the public with easier access to information about new laws and other proposals that affect the environment. It allows Ontarians to know about and contribute to government decisions, which helps hold the government accountable for those decisions.

"Better environmental outcomes result when Ontarians know and use their environmental rights," said Dianne Saxe, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO) and guardian of the EBR. "Ontario's environment is cleaner and healthier because of the Environmental Bill of Rights."

For 25 years, Commissioners and their staff have helped thousands of Ontarians to understand and navigate environmental issues, laws and regulations. The Environmental Commissioner has provided the public with reliable, fact-based, non-partisan reports on energy, environment and climate change that put the environment first.

Since 1994, the EBR and the ECO have contributed to positive environmental outcomes, including the provincial biodiversity strategy, the phase-out of coal-fired electricity generation, protection for species-at-risk, increased awareness and action on climate change, better management of protected areas and increased energy conservation, among many others.

Upcoming changes to the Environmental Bill of Rights will transfer some of the responsibilities of the ECO to the Auditor General and the Government of Ontario, and will close the Environmental Commissioner's office on or before May 1, 2019. The tools of the EBR will remain available for all Ontarians.

"The environment is too important, and too fragile, to blindly trust the government to look after it. Ontarians need to be vigilant. Now more than ever, with climate change gathering speed, it's about the future of the world we live in," said Saxe. "We are lucky to have environmental rights, and we all need to speak up for what we care about."

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#### **For more information or to schedule interviews, please contact:**

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*Aussi disponible en français*

*The **Environmental Commissioner of Ontario** is an independent officer of the Legislature who reports on government progress on environmental protection, climate change and energy conservation. The ECO is the province's environmental watchdog and guardian of Ontarians' environmental rights.*