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Statement of Environmental Values

Ministry of Economic Development and Growth

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ontario *Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR)* was proclaimed in February 1994. The founding principles of the *EBR* are stated in its Preamble:

- The people of Ontario recognize the inherent value of the natural environment.
- The people of Ontario have a right to a healthful environment.
- The people of Ontario have as a common goal the protection, conservation and restoration of the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

While the government has the primary responsibility for achieving this goal, Ontarians should have the means to ensure that it is achieved in an effective, timely, open and fair manner.

The purposes of the EBR are:

- To protect, conserve and where reasonable, restore the integrity of the environment by the means provided in the EBR;
- To provide sustainability of the environment by the means provided in the EBR; and
- To protect the right to a healthful environment by the means provided in the EBR.

These purposes include the following:

- The prevention, reduction and elimination of the use, generation and release of pollutants that are an unreasonable threat to the integrity of the environment.
- The protection and conservation of biological, ecological and genetic diversity.
- The protection and conservation of natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.
- The encouragement of the wise management of our natural resources, including plant life, animal life and ecological systems.
- The identification, protection and conservation of ecologically sensitive areas or processes.

To assist in fulfilling these purposes, the EBR provides:

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- The means by which Ontarians may participate in the making of environmentally significant decisions by the Government of Ontario;
- Increased accountability of the Government of Ontario for its environmental decision-making;
- Increased access to the courts by residents of Ontario for the protection of the environment; and
- Enhanced protection for employees who take action in respect of environmental harm.

The EBR requires a Statement of Environmental Values (SEV) from all prescribed ministries. The prescribed ministries are listed at: http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/content/index2.jsp?f0=aboutTheRegistry.statement&f1=aboutTheRegistry.statement.value&menuIndex=0_3&language=en

The SEV is a means for designated government ministries to record their commitment to the environment and be accountable for ensuring consideration of the environment in their decisions. An SEV explains:

- How the purposes of the EBR are to be applied when decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the ministry; and
- How consideration of the purposes of the *EBR* should be integrated with other considerations, including social, economic and scientific considerations that are part of decision-making in the ministry.

It is each Minister's responsibility to take every reasonable step to ensure that the SEV is considered whenever decisions that might significantly affect the environment are made in the Ministry.

Every five years the Minister will review the SEV and make any necessary amendments.

2. MINISTRY VISION, MANDATE AND BUSINESS

The mandate of the Ministry of Economic Development and Growth is to help to grow a strong, innovative economy that provides jobs and prosperity for all Ontarians, in a manner that supports both economic prosperity and environmental sustainability.

Key responsibilities in fulfilling this mandate include:

- Attracting investment that improves Ontario's innovation, export and productivity performance;
- Fostering an Innovation-Driven Economy;
- Supporting Scaling Up Innovative and High Growth Companies

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- Modernizing the Regulatory System and Reducing the Cost of Doing Business;
- Developing a Provincial Economic Strategy;
- Supporting Ontario Businesses by Improving Internal Trade in Canada;
- Accelerating the Growth of Ontario's Social Enterprise Sector; and
- Supporting the Climate Change Action Plan.

Specific details on the Ministry's activities and goals can be found on the Ministry website:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-economic-development-and-growth>

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/september-2016-mandate-letter-economic-development-and-growth>

3. APPLICATION OF THE SEV

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth is committed to applying the purposes of the EBR when decisions that might significantly affect the environment need to be made within the Ministry, and as it develops acts, regulations and policies.

4. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth will promote an innovative, competitive economy in a manner that is environmentally sustainable and supports the Province's commitment to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Ministry will take into account social, economic and other considerations; these will be integrated with the purposes of the EBR when making decisions that might significantly affect the environment.

5. MONITORING USE OF THE SEV

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth will document how the SEV was considered each time a decision on an act, regulation, or policy or instrument is posted on the Environmental Registry. The Ministry will ensure that staff involved in decisions that might significantly affect the environment is aware of the Ministry's Environmental Bill of Rights obligations.

6. CONSULTATION

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth believes that public consultation is vital to sound environmental decision-making. The Ministry will endeavour to provide opportunities for appropriate consultations, including with

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affected industries, and technical and environmental experts, when making decisions that might significantly affect the environment.

7. CLIMATE CHANGE

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth believes that the public interest requires a broad effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to build a cleaner and more resilient province. The Ministry will continue to involve and engage individuals, businesses, communities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and First Nation and Métis communities in the ultimate goal of fostering a high-productivity, resilient, low-carbon economy and society in Ontario.

8. CONSIDERATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth recognizes the value that Indigenous people place on the environment. When making decisions that might significantly affect the environment, the Ministry will provide opportunities for involvement of Indigenous people whose interests may be affected by such decisions so that Indigenous interests can be appropriately considered. This commitment is not intended to alter or detract from any constitutional obligation the province may have to consult with Indigenous people.

9. GREENING OF INTERNAL OPERATIONS AND ENERGY CONSERVATION

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth believes in the wise use and conservation of natural resources. The Ministry will cooperate and share knowledge with other Ministries in support of Government of Ontario initiatives to conserve energy and water, and to wisely use our air and land resources in order to generate environmental, health and economic benefits for present and future generations.

The Ministry of Economic Development and Growth is committed to reducing its environmental footprint, by greening its internal operations. The Ministry will support environmentally sustainable practices among its partners, stakeholder and suppliers as well as government-wide greening and sustainability initiatives.