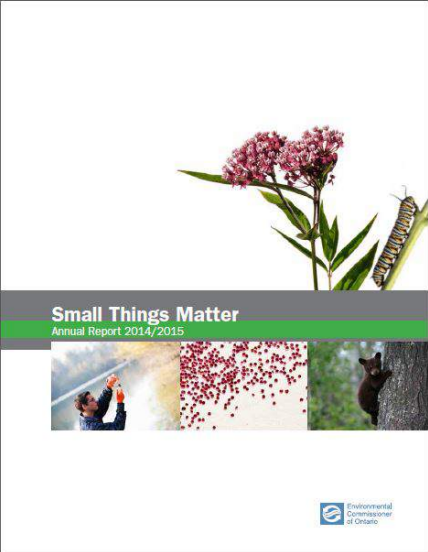


Small Things Matter ECO's 2014/2015 Annual Report

Sustainability Network
Nov 26, 2015

Ellen Schwartzel
Environmental Commissioner (Acting)



Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

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Environmental Bill of Rights: helping you:

- Have your say on environmental decisions
- Ask for new environmental laws and policies
- Ask for enforcement of environmental rules

2

Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

- Impartial, independent
- Officer of the Legislature
- environmental watchdog



New Environmental Commissioner: Dec. 1st

Dianne Saxe

- acclaimed environmental lawyer
- Ph.D. in environmental law



Small Things Matter

Many snapshots of stewardship by ministries:

- Biodiversity
- Species at risk
- Reducing pollution
- Managing Water



Small Things Matter

Environmental Registry: (MOECC)

The screenshot displays the Environmental Registry (MOECC) website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'About the Registry', 'Search', 'Home', and 'MyCRM'. Below this, there are search filters including 'With Registry Number', 'With the Exact Phrase', and 'With at least One of the Words'. A 'Search' button is located to the right of these filters. Below the search filters, there are sections for 'Title / Proposal', 'Keywords', 'Ministry (Ministry Type) / Ministry Status', 'Ministry Type', and 'Public Status'. Each section contains a list of checkboxes for selection.

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Environmental Registry: (MOECC)

Needs an overhaul:

- confusing search functions
- dated layout
- not mobile-friendly



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We've just made it easier:

Alerts on environmental issues you care about delivered to your inbox.

Don't miss out!
Get email alerts about notices on the Environmental Registry that may interest you — as they are posted.

[SIGN UP](#)

• www.eco.on.ca



Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

New conservation lands (MNRF)

Ontario's budget for land acquisition:
\$1000/year province-wide



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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



no fund for restoration



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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

Restoring degraded parklands (MNR)

-no fund for restoration

But: “Ecological Integrity” is the top
priority



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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

Light pollution (MNRF, MMAH)

- an overlooked part of “ecological integrity”
- should be considered in protected areas and species recovery plans

Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

Fish Passage (MNRF, MOECC)




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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

Fish Passage (MNRF, MOECC)

- >2500 dams; ~2% have fishways
- No LRIA orders requiring fish passage
- Waterpower Class EA – protecting fish passage?



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Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



Small Things Matter: Biodiversity



Small Things Matter: Biodiversity

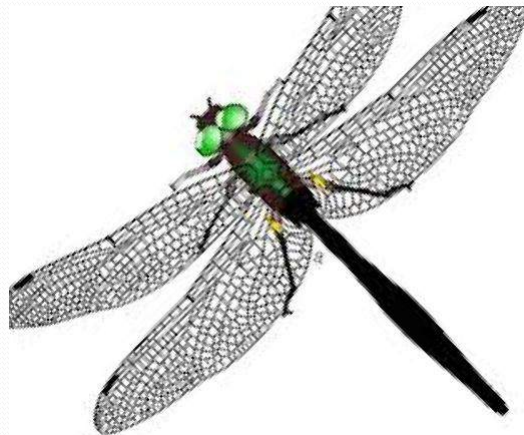
Spring Bear Hunt (MNR)

- Is goal to reduce bear-human conflicts?
- If yes, then science says focus on the things that attract bears
- Bear-Wise Program



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Small Things Matter: Species at Risk



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Small Things Matter:

Species at Risk

Government Response Statements (MNR)

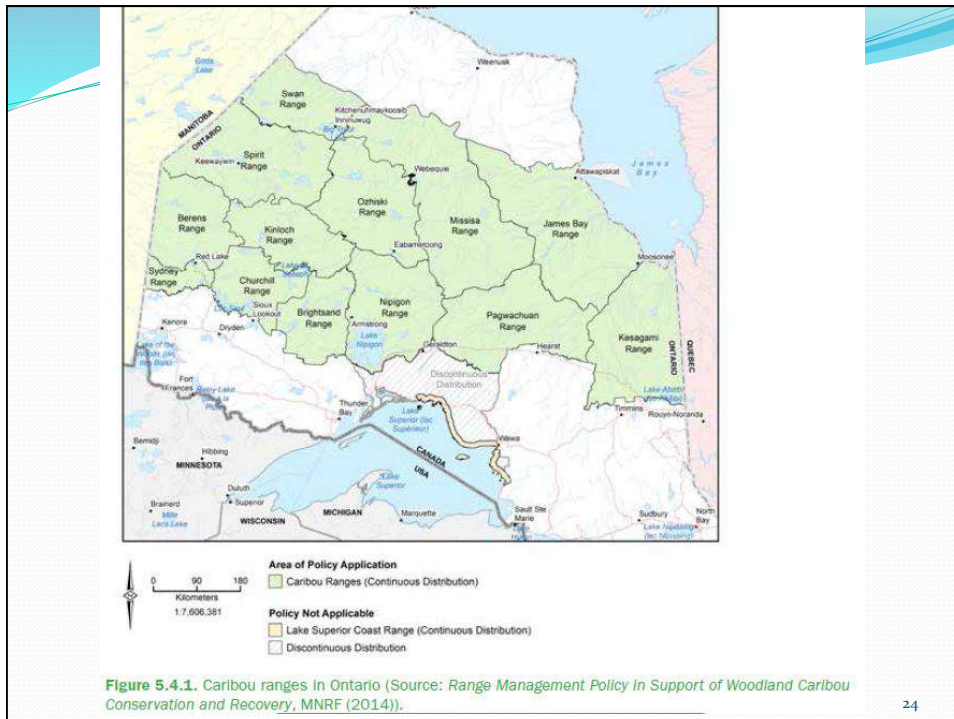
Endangered Species Act: sound foundation

But: outcomes so far?

Response statements lacking targets, timelines, action priorities, monitoring



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Small Things Matter: Species at Risk

Caribou (MNR)

Many policies and extensive monitoring

But: protection?

No effective threshold for habitat protection



Small Things Matter:



Small Things Matter: Reducing Pollution

Birds killed by buildings (MOECC)

Ontarians used their EBR rights:
Reflected light a “contaminant” under EPA
So MOECC should regulate

Minister has now committed to look at options



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Small Things Matter: Reducing Pollution



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Small Things Matter: Reducing Pollution

MOECC “endeavours to have the perpetrator of pollution pay for the cost of clean up and rehabilitation consistent with the polluter pays principle.”



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Small Things Matter: Reducing Pollution

Polluter Pay (MOECC, MNDM)

Financial Assurance:

- often not required
- not always promptly provided
- doesn't always cover costs



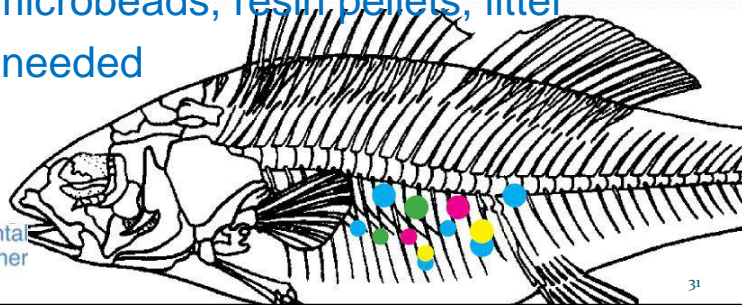
Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Great Lakes: microplastics (MOECC)

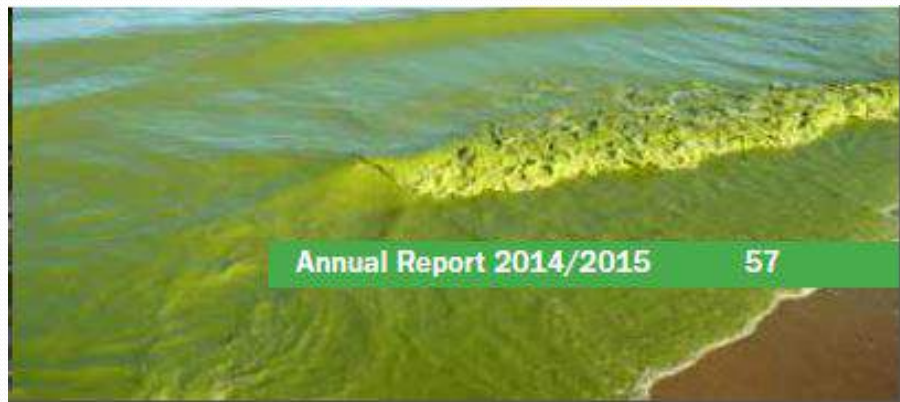
- pervasive
- risk of moving toxic compounds into food chain

Sources: microbeads, resin pellets, litter

- research needed



Small Things Matter: Managing Water



Small Things Matter: Managing Water



Small Things Matter: Managing Water

**Great Lakes:
Greenhouse Wastewater (MOECC, OMAFRA)**

Part of a larger issue - phosphorus loadings

Report annually: do greenhouse discharges meet
Provincial Water Quality Objectives?

Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Great Lakes: Canada-Ontario Agreement (8th COA)

Targets for phosphorus in Lake Erie

Funding: \$9.3 million/year for COA
Timeframes? Accountable ministries?



Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Transparency: water taking permits (MOECC)

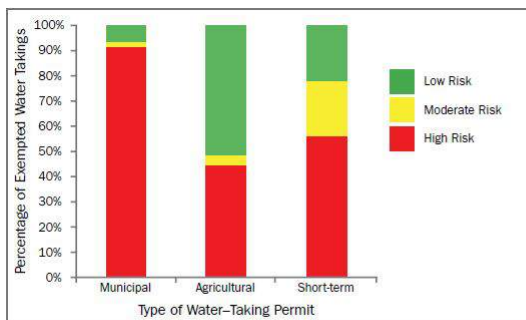


Figure 3.4.2. Environmental risk categories of water-taking permits exempted from the *Environmental Bill of Rights* notice and comment rights (Source: MOECC, November 2014).



Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Transparency: water taking permits (MOECC)

-no public comment allowed for many high-risk permits

-public not given context for water takings: water body? Risk ranking? Background studies?



Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Water charges: water taking permits (MOECC)

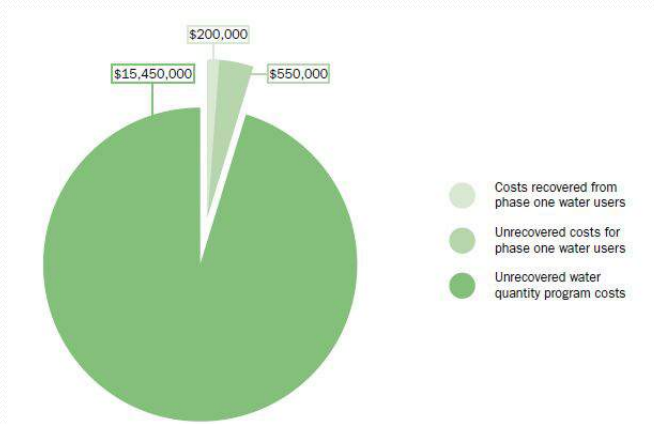


Figure 3.3.1. Water quantity program costs, 2012.

Small Things Matter: Managing Water

Water charges: water taking permits (MOECC)

-most water users still pay no charge for the water they are permitted to take

-Ontario spends >\$16 million/year; recovers only 1.2% of its water quantity management costs



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Thank you!

Questions?

for presentation, go to:
<http://sustainabilitynetwork.ca/events/>



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Ellen Schwartzel, Commissioner (Acting)

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