

Managing New Challenges

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Sustainability Network Webinar

January 22, 2015

Overview



- What were important environmental decisions?
- What applications for review and investigation were filed?
- What developing issues are emerging?

But First ... An Advertisement

- **who is the Environmental Commissioner?**



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 - an Officer of the Legislature appointed by a vote of all the MPP's
 - **specifically oversees the decision making of 14 government Ministries as those decisions relate to the environment**

But First ... An Advertisement

- who is the Environmental Commissioner?
- no political or vested interests ... I speak for the trees



ECO examined...

- Plight of the Pollinators



Plight of the Pollinators

- **Honey bees colonies are failing**
- **The immunity of the bees to disease and parasites has been compromised**
- **Neurotoxic symptoms have been found**
- **Mass bee deaths have been investigated**
- Wild bees/other pollinators are in decline
- Insect eating birds populations are declining

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Growing concern over neonicotinoids

- **Class of widely used pesticides**
- **Water soluble, persistent neurotoxins**
- **They are systemic: found in pollen, nectar and guttation droplets**
- Find their way to soil, wild plants and aquatic systems
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The ECO Recommends ...

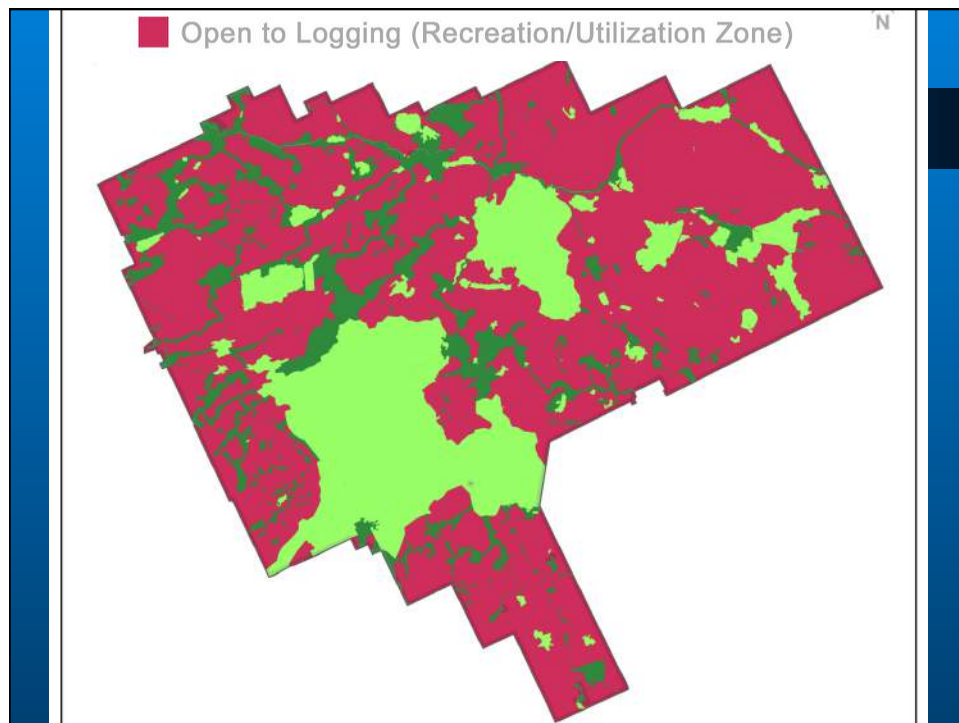
- **The Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of the Environment undertake monitoring to determine the prevalence and effects of neonicotinoids in soil, waterways and wild plants.**

Important Environmental Decisions

- **Commercial Logging in Algonquin Park**

Logging in Algonquin

- In 2013 the Algonquin Park Management Plan was amended to lighten the ecological footprint in the Park



Planning and management principles

3. The following principles shall guide all aspects of the planning and management of Ontario's system of provincial parks and conservation reserves:

1. Maintenance of ecological integrity shall be the first priority and the restoration of ecological integrity shall be considered.

Prohibited uses

16. (1) The following activities **shall not be carried out** on lands that are part of a provincial park or conservation reserve:

1. Commercial timber harvest.

2. Generation of electricity.

3. Prospecting, staking mining claims, developing mineral interests or working mines.

4. Extracting aggregate, topsoil or peat.

5. Other industrial uses. 2006, c. 12, s. 16 (1).

The ECO Recommends ...

- **That the Ministry of Natural Resources publicly commit to the end of commercial logging in Algonquin Provincial Park**

ECO examined ...

- **MOE Compliance Policy**



Some MOE Compliance Problems

- **Dust emissions from cement manufacturing facility**
- **Dust emissions from a mine operation**
- **Asphalt blender operating without environmental approval**
- **Concrete plant operating without environmental approval**

Abatement tools

- **Voluntary actions such as:**
 - Education and outreach; and
 - Abatement plans.
- **Mandatory actions such as:**
 - Amendment or suspension of an Authorizing Document (e.g., ECA);
 - Issuance of Orders
 - Monetary Environmental Penalties.

Enforcement Tools

- **Prosecutions under the Provincial Offences Act, including:**
 - Issuing tickets;
 - Issuing a summons; and
 - Laying charges.

Informed Judgment Matrix (IJM)		Health/Environmental Consequences					
		1. Administrative	2. Minor Environmental	3. Minor Health	4. Medium Environmental	5. Major Environmental	6. Medium/Major Health
Compliance History	A. No History / Good Compliance History	Compliance Category I Voluntary		Compliance Category II Mandatory		Compliance Category III Enforcement	
	B. Previous Violation (unrelated)						
	C. Previous Violation (related)						
	D. Ongoing Violation Not Resolved Despite Ministry Directions						
	E. Previous Significant Convictions or Environmental Penalty Orders						
	F. Obstruction / False Information						

Applications Filed ...

- **Failing the Aamjiwnaang First Nation**



A January 2013 Incident

- **Applicants alleged that a strong, rotten egg-like odour, as well as a gasoline smell, was evident for several hours and that many residents experienced: red eyes; headaches; nausea; throat irritation; dizziness; shortness of breath; coughing; and skin irritation**

A January 2013 Incident

- **Beyond these physical effects, the applicants also expressed concerns with how the incident was managed. Specifically, they reported that the emergency sirens that alert the community that a shelter-in-place advisory has been issued were not sounded in the area until almost an hour after the advisory was issued**

The MOE did not address:

- **the severity and persistence of the reported health symptoms**
- **the reported failure to sound the emergency sirens at the time the shelter-in-place advisory was issued; nor**
- **the applicants' concerns about communication breakdowns and lack of information**

The ECO Recommends ...

- **That the Ministry of the Environment enhance its efforts to eliminate the adverse effects of the industrial facilities within Chemical Valley on the Aamjiwnaang community and the environment**

Applications Filed ...

- **Filing the Aamjiwnaang First Nation**
- **Disposal of High Sodium Brines as Dust Suppressants**

Disposal of High Sodium Brines

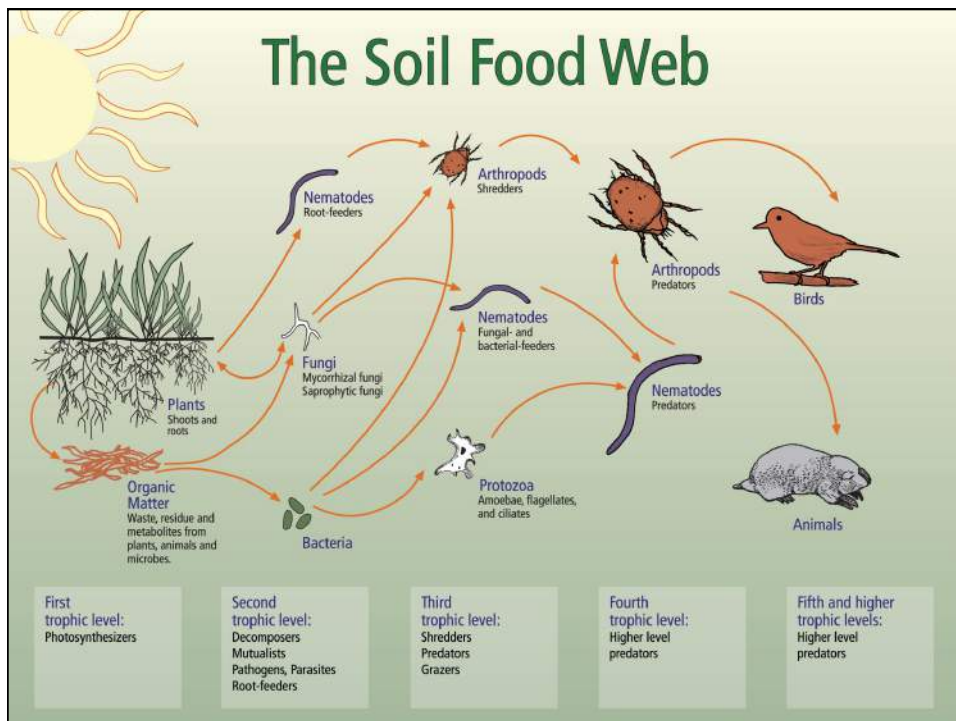
- **Calcium and Magnesium Chloride salts are hygroscopic and are useful as dust suppressants (but are costly)**
- **Increasingly waste Sodium Chloride brine is being peddled as a cheap substitute**
- **NaCl is a toxic contaminant that is only used on winter roads for safety**

The ECO Recommends ...

- **That MOE regulate the use and disposal of ground-sourced brine from oil and gas extraction activities for dust suppression**

Developing Issues

- **Healthy Soils Yield Benefits**



Three Soil Conservation Leaders

- **Dan Konzelmann – Organic Farming**
 - reduced weed and disease pressure
- **Dean Glenney – Fencerow Farming**
 - his crops utilize everything he applies
- **Joe Gorski – Biological Farming**
 - he applies fertilizer in combination with humic acid, which binds it

The ECO Recommends ...

- **That the Ministry of Agriculture and Food identify Ontario's leaders in soil health and systematically integrate their key success factors in the ministry's farm educational materials and research priorities.**

Thank You for Your Attention

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