Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Office of the Minister

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Ontario

December 16, 2020

Kurt Greaves
CAO/Deputy-Clerk
County of Lanark
kgreaves@lanarkcounty.ca

Dear Kurt Greaves:

In order to help farm businesses and municipalities save time and money, the Ontario government is posting a discussion paper on a new regulatory proposal to implement recent amendments to the Drainage Act, which received Royal Assent on July 21, 2020, as part of Bill 197, the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act.

The proposed regulation supports the government's commitment to reduce burden and promote economic development while maintaining effective environmental standards. A discussion paper will be posted on Ontario's Regulatory and Environmental Registry for a 60-day public comment period from December 9 2020 to February 7, 2021 and can be accessed on the Environmental Registry at this website address: www.ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2814.

Drainage is critical for supporting agricultural productivity and the production of food. It enables sector growth by delivering economic benefits such as improved crop productivity and flood control, while supporting environmental benefits such as nutrient loss reduction, reduced soil erosion and habitat protection. That is why I encourage you to submit your comments on the proposed regulation and let your perspective on this important matter be known as we finalize this regulation.

My ministry will be hosting webinars for key stakeholders who play an important role or who have an interest in the Drainage Act and the recent changes. The webinars are scheduled for:

- January 7, 10:00-11:30 am: Municipalities/Drainage Industry
- January 8, 10:00-11:30 am: Environmental Groups, Indigenous Communities, Conservation Authorities and the public
- January 12, 2:00-3:30 pm: Municipalities/Drainage Industry
- January 14, 2:00-3:30 pm: Municipalities/Drainage Industry
- January 15, 2:00-3:30 pm: General Farm Organizations

To register, please complete the registration form at this website, https://survey.clicktools.com/app/survey/go.jsp?iv=1yoz6wboh3a0f, or contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre (AICC) by email to ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca or you can call 1-877-424-1300.

Although the webinars are targeted to specific audiences, you are welcome to enroll at a time or date that better suits your schedule. Printed copies of the French Discussion Paper are also available from the AICC on request.

I look forward to learning the results of the consultation and your contribution to it.

Sincerely,

Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

COVID-19 Reminders

- Practise physical distancing – stay 2 metres away from others in public
- Wash your hands – with soap and water thoroughly and often
- Get the facts - www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread