



Public Campaign Launched to Promote Conservation Path for Ontario's Water Opportunities Act

TORONTO, ONTARIO (April 14, 2010) – A diverse coalition of environmental, industry, labour and community organizations as well as individual Ontarians have launched a public campaign today to ensure the provincial government includes a strong conservation and efficiency theme in the proposed Water Opportunities Act. The Ontario Water Conservation Alliance is also releasing its platform entitled *Conserve Our Water*.

“A strong water conservation and efficiency program will create jobs, protect the environment and save Ontario taxpayer dollars by avoiding new and unnecessary water facilities and lowering energy costs,” said Carol Maas, Innovation and Technology Director, POLIS Water Sustainability Project.

“It is far cheaper to fix inefficiencies than to build new infrastructure and the savings go beyond our pocketbook,” added Derek Stack, Executive Director of Great Lakes United. “Water conservation will reduce the energy used to pump, treat and heat water and this will lower greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment.”

The Alliance came together after the government announced its plans for the Act as part of the Speech from the Throne. While supportive of the government's intention to make water issues a public policy priority, the Alliance believes an environmentally sustainable and economically secure province requires a comprehensive water conservation and efficiency strategy.

The Alliance's platform is built on three key themes:

- **Setting meaningful targets and measuring performance**
Targets build momentum for improvement and accurate performance measurements ensure we succeed. Accountability can be maintained through mandatory monitoring and reporting of targets.
- **Requiring conservation plans, establishing efficiency standards and supporting green infrastructure**
Linking water conservation requirements explicitly to infrastructure grants will ensure we do not repeat past mistakes. In addition, land use planning, landscape design and building decisions should incorporate innovative water conservation, leafy green infrastructure and low-impact development approaches.

- **Fostering market transformation and a culture of conservation**
The province should lead by example and ensure public sector buildings, operations and facilities initiate and embrace conservation plans and water-efficient procurement policies. This would feed into a broader social marketing strategy with the goal of instilling a province-wide “ethic of water stewardship.”

The economic benefits from a strong government commitment to water conservation and efficiency are vast. The revenues of the world’s water-related businesses are expected to nearly double to \$1 trillion by 2020, and global water shortages will drive the need for innovations that emphasize efficiency, re-use and source diversification. Mississauga-based Niagara Flapperless is an excellent example of this innovation in action. The developers of leak-free water-efficient toilets and the world’s first single-flush 3-litre toilet represent the green economy this government is trying to build.

“Government incentives used to help foster a culture of water conservation would create new opportunities for green technology developed by Ontario entrepreneurs,” said Jerrad Hennessy, General Manager, Niagara Flapperless. “Programs aimed at the adoption of new green technology would be good news for businesses, good news for consumers and good news for all Ontarians concerned about the responsible and efficient use of water.”

Over the coming weeks, the Alliance will be releasing evidence of the economic, energy and taxpayer benefits that can be realized from a legislated commitment to water conservation and efficiency. The Alliance’s full platform, list of partners and opportunities for public engagement can be viewed at www.conserveourwater.ca.

“The Province has opened the door to a new way of thinking about water,” said Stack. “The Ontario Water Conservation Alliance urges the government to seize this historic opportunity to secure a healthy, clean water supply for many generations to come.”

About the Ontario Water Conservation Alliance

*The Ontario Water Conservation Alliance is a coalition of citizens, non-governmental organizations and businesses who believe an environmentally sustainable and economically secure province requires a comprehensive water conservation and efficiency strategy. The Alliance is therefore advocating for a Water **Conservation and Opportunities Act for Ontario**. For more information please visit: www.conserveourwater.ca.*

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Christopher Holcroft / Eva Lannon
Rideau Institute, for the Alliance
416-996-0767 / 416-300-9721
cholcroft@rideauinstitute.ca / elannonassoc@gmail.com