

*News Release***Ontario Names Special Advisor on Flooding**

July 18, 2019

**Taking immediate action to improve flood resilience and mitigation efforts**

OTTAWA - The Ontario government is putting people first by taking swift action to address concerns from those affected by flooding.

Today John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, and Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care, announced that Doug McNeil has been named Ontario's Special Advisor on flooding. Mr. McNeil will advise the province on ways to reduce the impacts of flooding and ensure communities can recover quickly.

"We heard from people across the province and saw first-hand the damage caused by flooding in so many communities," said Minister Yakabuski. "We want to help Ontarians protect what matters most, and the Special Advisor will help better prepare our province for flooding in the future."

The Special Advisor will assess current roles and responsibilities of governments, agencies and organizations involved in flood management, including any opportunities for improvement; review feedback received; identify focused recommendations; and ensure all recommendations are consistent with the province's ability to implement them.

Flooding is a serious problem that is becoming increasingly common as Ontario experiences more frequent extreme weather events. The province held Flooding Engagement Sessions earlier this year in Muskoka, Pembroke, and Ottawa to hear from municipalities and industry leaders on how to better prepare for and respond to floods. The Special Advisor will build on input from those sessions as well as feedback from the public.

The government is also making it easier for property and homeowners to take immediate action when flooding happens. Property owners can [apply online](#) for a work permit to repair eroded shorelines and conduct erosion control immediately.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry has launched a new [Surface Water Monitoring Centre webpage](#) with access to flood early warning messages. This will help property and homeowners prepare for and respond to flood conditions and take action to stay safe and reduce flood damage by responding to early warnings in advance of an emergency.

"It is important for the people of Kanata-Carleton and across Ontario to have accurate information about flooding and resources they can access when they need it," said Minister Fullerton. "We want to help the people of Ontario work on their properties in the most efficient way possible."

### **Background: Doug McNeil**

- Mr. McNeil's extensive government experience includes 36 years in public service with the City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba. Positions held include Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, Vice President of Engineering and Construction and Vice-President of Hydraulics with the Manitoba Floodway Authority.
- Mr. McNeil has been involved in many aspects of water resource planning, operations, and management, including hydraulics, hydrology, stormwater management, and water control structures. He played key roles in the 1997 "Flood of the Century" on the Red River and led the Floodway Expansion project which included a provincial review of floodway operating rules and flood protection studies of mitigation measures for Winnipeg.
- As Manitoba's Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, Mr. McNeil was responsible for a vast infrastructure network including drains and culverts, multi-functional dams and reservoirs, diversion channels and flood pumping stations. He was also responsible for hydrologic forecasting and the emergency measures organization, which involved business continuity planning, critical infrastructure and cyber security.
- Mr. McNeil holds both Bachelor and Master's degrees in Engineering and has received numerous distinguished awards related to design and construction of various components of work on Manitoba's flood structures including the Red River Floodway Expansion Project. Mr. McNeil recently retired as Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Winnipeg.

### **CONTACTS**

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