

357-2020-340

Dear Mr. Dunlop:

Thank you for your emailed letter of February 6, 2020 to Minister Yurek regarding an Eastern Hemlock forest in Peterborough County. I am pleased to respond on behalf of the Minister.

The ministry appreciates learning about your concerns regarding protecting this forest. Protecting species at risk and conserving their habitat is something the ministry takes very seriously, and we agree that it is important to consider the effects of activities on species at risk in planning and decision-making.

Until June 30, 2020, forest operations conducted in accordance with an MNRF-approved Forest Management Plan are exempt from requiring additional authorizations under the *Endangered Species Act*. Ontario's forest management planning framework has tools and mechanisms in place to ensure the consideration of impacts to species at risk during forest operations. As you may know, forest management policies and practices and guides to protect Ontario's forests fall within the purview of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF). I understand you have already contacted MNRF about your concerns.

Additionally, you requested that this Crown land be considered as an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) or be annexed to Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park. Currently, there are no plans to annex Crown land as an addition to the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park.

Again, thank you for sharing your concerns with the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.

Sincerely,

Jeff Arp  
Supervisor  
Corporate Correspondence Unit  
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks