



Canadian Federation of University Women  
**ONTARIO COUNCIL**



**Comments on:**

**Simcoe Area:  
A Strategic Area of Growth (2009)**

**to the**

**Ontario Growth Secretariat,  
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure  
September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009**

**By the**

**Ontario Council  
Canadian Federation of University Women**

Submitted by  
Myra Willis  
President, Ontario Council  
Canadian Federation of University Women  
[cfuwontario@yahoo.com](mailto:cfuwontario@yahoo.com)  
[www.cfuwontcouncil.ca](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca)

**Researched and written by Carolyn Day,  
Water Issues, CFUW Ontario Council**

Ontario Growth Secretariat,  
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure,  
777 Bay Street, Suite 425  
Toronto, ON M5G 2E5  
[placestogrow@ontario.ca](mailto:placestogrow@ontario.ca)

## **SIMCOE AREA: A STRATEGIC AREA OF GROWTH (2009)**

The Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW): Ontario Council is pleased to respond to the June 2009 posting of **Simcoe Area: A Strategic Vision for Growth**.

CFUW Ontario Council has supported the vision and priorities of the Government of Ontario which are reflected in the **Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement**, the **Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act (SSOWA)**, and the **Lake Simcoe Protection Act**.

Although this proposal, **Simcoe Area: A Strategic Vision for Growth (2009)**, sets out the parameters and priorities for growth in only one county in Ontario, the decisions that are made and the planning priorities they reflect, especially in the areas of water, energy and ecology have the potential to set precedents which could affect many regions across the province.

In reading this document, we are concerned that there seems to be a disconnect - even a contradiction - between provincial vision and legislation, and several areas of the growth plan set out for Simcoe County.

### **Water Conservation:**

Since 2001, CFUW policy has asked government to promote conservation and more efficient use of surface water and ground water.

By signing the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement (SWRA), and by passing the Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act (SSOWA), the province of Ontario is committed to "develop a water conservation and efficiency strategy...emphasizing the importance of taking ecological needs for water into account. From August 25 to September 10, the province is holding a series of consultations based on its Proposal Paper **Stewardship, Leadership, Accountability** to formulate its conservation strategy.

The *Vision for Growth* promotes energy conservation in many areas. However, there is no mention of the requirement for any specific water conservation measures in growth areas. Nor is the important link made between water conservation and energy savings. It is also unclear whether any of the proposed water supply lines will constitute an intra-basin transfer of water, which contradicts the government's international commitment under the SWRA.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the *Vision of Growth* incorporate specific water conservation strategies for all its new growth areas, and that no intra-basin transfers of water are considered.

**Land Use:**

Since 1998, CFUW Ontario Council's policy has asked that the Government of Ontario "establish land use allocations, policies and procedures for managing our public lands that support healthy, sustainable communities.."; and "ensure that public lands outside protected areas are managed such that plans, practices, processes ... are conducted to maintain the ecological integrity of the region." Since 1995, CFUW policy has advocated the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns, including ecologically safe waste disposal. And since 1992 our policy has asked government to mandate better coordination between land use planning and transportation planning to create more compact communities.

We are concerned that two new "employment areas" are proposed for the Highway 400 corridor, far removed from existing urban infrastructure.

- Rather than using land already designated for development within urban centres, these employment areas will replace prime farmland with large areas of impermeable surfaces - buildings, roads, parking lots - which will adversely affect the recharge of the aquifer with the attendant danger of pollution from the site seeping into the surface water.
- There is no mention of the measures that would be required to assure water conservation and efficiency in these new developments.
- Because the developments are so far removed from a municipal water supply, new, lengthy pipelines and high-energy pumps would be needed to accommodate water, storm water and waste water services for the sites - despite the fact that the *Vision for Growth* promotes energy conservation.

- Because the developments are so far removed from urban communities, workers would be forced to travel distances to their place of work, thus increasing greenhouse gas emissions at a time when the province is trying to promote a reduction in emission levels through use of public transit.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the new "employment areas" be located in closer proximity to an existing urban centre where there are vacant lands already designated for either residential and/or employment development, and municipal services are available; and

That these vacant urban lands be utilized before approvals are granted on the development of any greenfields, especially on greenfields far removed from municipal services.

**Lake Simcoe Development:**

Since 2001, CFUW policy has asked government to adopt and implement a sustainable and prudent water management policy to respond to long term regional needs with due regard to the ecosystem and hydrogeological reality. Since 1990 CFUW has asked government to be alert to any proposed development in areas where there are wetlands that might be degraded or lost. Since 1992 we have advocated for the protection of the marine environment.

The government of Ontario has passed the Clean Water Act which is watershed based, and gives precedence to whichever law provides the most protection for the environment. The Government has passed the Lake Simcoe Protection Act.

The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan will set new targets for phosphorus loading in the sub watersheds, and the Assimilative Capacity Study is currently underway. The assessment report is due this fall.

Drinking Water Source Protection Committees have a strong mandate to protect the quality and quantity of water in the watersheds as they affect municipal water systems.

***Vision For Growth* does not seem to take these important studies and pieces of legislation into careful consideration nor made them an integral part of its plan.**

CFUW Ontario Council is concerned about the health of Lake Simcoe and the integrity of the Lake Simcoe watershed.

- The lake is already under stress from high phosphorus levels. Yet there are no stringent new rules for the development of summer homes to protect the integrity of the shoreline and the capacity of the lake to absorb new development.
- *Vision for Growth* seems to be making planning decisions before the results from the Assimilative Capacity Study are available, without proper consideration for what they might show.
- Although the watershed is under stress from high levels of phosphorus, new development is still being planned for this vulnerable watershed which will have the potential to add more phosphorus and other pollutants and causing further damage to the ecosystem.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That there be a moratorium on any major new development in the Lake Simcoe watershed - especially around Lake Simcoe - until the results of the Assimilative Capacity Study are known and the assessment shows that further development can proceed without further damaging the ecology of the Lake and its watershed

**Public Ownership:**

In 2001, CFUW policy declared that water, being a non-renewable resource of paramount importance, belongs to the public and its use must be regulated in the public interest.

It seems to be unclear in the *Vision for Growth*, whether the new water systems will be publicly owned, or whether the private sector will be invited to invest in them.

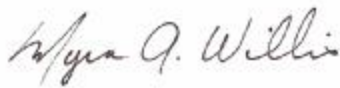
**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the *Vision for Growth* document make explicit its intention that all new water services in areas of growth would be under public control, owned and operated by and for the public.

**CFUW Ontario Council:**

The Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women is composed of 57 clubs comprised of graduates living in urban and rural areas across Ontario. We are non-partisan, non-sectarian and we are totally member funded. Our members are active in public affairs, advocating on public education, justice, health and environmental issues as well as the status of women and human rights. Ontario Council is part of the Canadian Federation of University Women and has links to the International Federation of University Women.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Myra Q. Willis".

Myra Willis  
President, Ontario Council  
Canadian Federation of University Women  
[cfuwontario@yahoo.com](mailto:cfuwontario@yahoo.com)  
[www.cfuwontcouncil.ca](http://www.cfuwontcouncil.ca)

## APPENDIX A

### **Canadian Federation of University Women ONTARIO COUNCIL**

Policy relating to the

### **Simcoe Area: A Strategic Area of Growth**

**Note: CFUW Ontario Council policy integrates policy passed by CFUW Ontario Council as well as that of CFUW and IFUW**

#### **ONTARIO SPECIFIC POLICY:**

##### **1998 Environment - Natural Resources**

RESOLVED: That the Canadian Federation of University Women/Ontario Council urge the Government of Ontario to:

- establish land-use allocations, policies, and procedures for managing our public lands that support healthy, sustainable communities with an economic base capable of providing continuity and diversity of employment, an attractive investment climate and the same range of community and health services available in the rest of Ontario;
- protect Ontario's biological and geological diversity, wildlife and natural heritage through a robust system of distinctive and representative lands permanently withdrawn from mining, logging, and hydro-electric development;
- ensure that public lands outside protected areas are managed such that plans, practices, processes and timing of the resource-use operations are conducted to maintain the ecological integrity of the region;
- protect and maintain at least 15% of each ecological site district in a road-free, unfragmented condition, in areas of 10,000 hectares or more; 5. protect a minimum of 10% of old-growth forest of each forest type in each ecological site district;
- protect the habitat for species at risk and provide sufficient natural habitat to maintain the full range of native species in Ontario when evaluating land-use alternatives and designating protected areas. This would include the provision of wildlife corridors which connect protected areas, and the provision of sufficient, appropriate areas for ranging and procreation of animal species;
- identify provincially significant wetlands and designate them within the protected areas; and
- reserve sufficient and appropriate lands to complete the representative protected areas system, chiefly in the parks system. This will require at least 12% of all lands within the planning area, compared with the 5% currently protected.

## **CFUW/IFUW POLICY:**

### **2004 Protection of Water**

The 28th IFUW Conference resolves:  
that National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to:

1. protect water resources and specifically declare that water, being a non-renewable natural resource of paramount importance, be protected at all levels of government and its use and price be regulated;
2. oppose all efforts to make privatization of water a condition for receiving financial aid,
3. adopt and implement a sustainable and prudent water management policy to respond to long-term regional needs with due regard to the ecosystem and hydro-geological reality; and,
4. promote conservation and more efficient use of surface water and groundwater at individual, local, national and international levels.

### **2001 Canadian Water**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments of Canada to protect our water resources and specifically to declare that water, being a non-renewable natural resource of paramount importance, belongs to the Canadian public and its use must be regulated in the long-term public interest;

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to adopt and implement a sustainable and prudent water management policy to respond to long-term regional needs with due regard to the ecosystem and hydrogeological reality; and

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge the federal, provincial and territorial governments to promote conservation and more efficient use of surface water and groundwater at individual, local, provincial, territorial, national and international levels.

### **2000 Canadian Water**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada and the provincial and territorial governments to take all measures necessary to ensure that large-scale freshwater commercial exports carried out by any means do not take place.

## 1995 Sustainability

RESOLVED, That national federations and associations should:

1. urge their respective legislative bodies to incorporate the protection of the environment as an overall goal into their basic laws;
2. help raise a general awareness of the necessity of protecting the environment, in particular by expounding the consequences of resource depletion, the degradation of natural systems, the dangers of pollution and the destruction of fragile ecosystems;
3. promote the education of girls and boys of all ages in science, technology and disciplines relating to the natural environment; and
4. encourage governments to promote the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns including ecologically safe waste disposal, the re-use and recycling of resources, the reduction of air pollutants, the careful management of energy sources and the use of environmentally sound technologies.

## 1992 Public Transportation

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada and provincial, territorial and municipal governments to:

1. Invest in public transportation to ensure frequent, reliable, convenient, affordable and universally accessible service;
2. Create incentives to encourage greater use of mass transit and discourage the use of private vehicles;
3. Mandate better co-ordination between land use planning and transportation planning to create more compact communities; and

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge its members to drive less and whenever possible to walk, bike, car pool or take public transit.

## 1988 Drinking Water Quality

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada, to enact legislation which would establish substantive and procedural laws in order to:

1. set rigorous quality standards for ground and surface drinking water which would be updated frequently to reflect current research and increased technology; and develop strict standardized inspection, testing and enforcement procedures to uphold these standards;

2. fund research into the identification and removal of substances in the drinking water which may be harmful to human health and distribute the results of such research to the provincial and territorial authorities responsible for administering water quality legislation;
3. provide user protection by:
  - a) requiring immediate public notification of instances of water contamination and ensuring an adequate supply of safe water either by decontamination or the provision of alternate sources; and
  - b) requiring the inclusion of safe water provisions in Emergency Planning Canada and promoting emergency planning schemes at other government levels.

### **1990 Preservation of Wetlands**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) urge the Government of Canada to:

1. establish a standard system of evaluation of wetlands, in co-operation with the provincial and territorial governments in order to identify wetlands which it is agreed are worthy of preservation and statutory protection. (specially significant);
2. increase its support of research on wetlands;
3. increase its efforts to make the Canadian public aware of the vital importance of wetlands; and

RESOLVED, That CFUW urge their provincial and territorial governments to:

1. a) establish a system of evaluation for wetlands consistent with the national system, and to pass legislation to protect and monitor those wetlands which have been identified as specially significant;
  - b) increase their support of research on wetlands;
  - c) increase their efforts to make the public aware of the vital importance of wetlands; and to
2. a) be alert to any proposed development in areas where there are wetlands which might be degraded or lost; and
  - b) urge the relevant planning boards, municipal councils and like authorities at the local level to have evaluations done in order to preserve significant wetlands.

## Appendix B

# Canadian Federation of University Women ONTARIO COUNCIL Club Locations

Ajax – Pickering	Kitchener - Waterloo	Owen Sound & Area
Aurora - Newmarket	Leaside - East York	Perth
Barrie & District	London	Peterborough
Belleville & District	Markham- Unionville	Renfrew & District
Brampton	Milton & District	Sarnia Lambton
Brantford	Mississauga	Saugeen
Burlington	Muskoka	Scarborough
Cambridge	Nepean	Southport
Chatham -Kent	Niagara Falls	St. Catharines
Cornwall & District	Norfolk	St. Thomas
Etobicoke	North Bay	Stratford
Georgetown	North Toronto	Sudbury
Georgian Triangle	North York	Thunder Bay
Grimsby	Northumberland	Toronto
Guelph	Oakville	Vaughan
Haliburton Highlands	Orangeville & District	Welland & District
Hamilton	Orillia	Windsor
Kanata	Orleans	
Kincardine	Oshawa & District	
Kingston	Ottawa	