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## **PROVINCE GIVES ONTARIANS A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**

*Changes To Nutrient Management Act Will Require Time For Public Input*

TORONTO — The McGuinty government is enhancing Ontarians participation in decisions that affect the environment by requiring time for public comment on proposed changes to the Nutrient Management Act, Environment Minister Laurel Broten announced today.

“We all share the responsibility for protecting our environment,” Broten said. “By increasing public involvement in environmental decision-making we are ensuring that everyone can play a more effective role in protecting our environment.”

The Nutrient Management Act enhances the protection of Ontario’s water resources by minimizing the effects of livestock manure and other nutrients that are stored on farm property or land-applied. Bringing the act under the Environmental Bill of Rights ensures that the public will be provided with at least a 30-day opportunity to comment on proposed changes to the legislation and its existing regulation, as well as any proposed regulations. It will also enhance the government’s mandate of protecting both the environment and human health through openness and public participation.

This initiative responds to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario’s call in the 2004-2005 Annual Report to prescribe the Nutrient Management Act under the Environmental Bill of Rights. The Environmental Bill of Rights establishes a framework for notifying the public about proposals that could have a significant effect on the environment and allows for the consideration of the public's input before the government makes a final decision on a proposal.

“By prescribing the Nutrient Management Act under Ontario’s Environmental Bill of Rights, we will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to provide comments before the government makes decisions about nutrient management legislation and regulation,” said Broten.

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