

JIM WILSON

Member of Provincial Parliament
Simcoe-Grey
Official Opposition House Leader



October 13, 2017

The Honourable Kathleen O. Wynne, MPP
Premier of Ontario
Room 281, Main Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A1

The Honourable Kathryn McGarry
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
Suite 6630, 6th Floor, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3

Dear Premier and Minister:

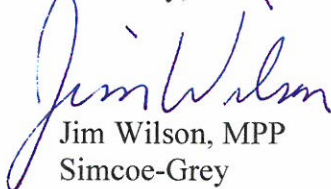
Enclosed please find copied correspondence from Mrs. Susan Antler, Chair of Friends of the Utopia Mill and Park, concerning the government's proposed closure of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility in Angus.

As you will read in her letter, Mrs. Antler is concerned that the decision to close the facility was made without any public consultation. She respectfully requests that the plan to close the facility be put on hold pending the outcome of a consultative process with industry experts and the community.

Premier and Minister, I don't think a consultation process is unreasonable. The Ontario Tree Seed Plant is a public entity and its potential closure should have public input. That said, I would appreciate it if you would review the situation and respond.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,



Jim Wilson, MPP
Simcoe-Grey

Encl.

c. Mrs. Susan Antler, Chair – Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park

☐ Queen's Park Office: Room 241NW • Legislative Bldg. • Queen's Park • Toronto, ON • M7A 1A8 • Tel. (416) 325-2069 • Fax (416) 325-2079

☐ Constituency Offices: 50 Hume St. • Collingwood ON • L9Y1V2 • Tel. (705) 446-1090 • Fax (705) 446-3397
180 Parsons Rd. • Unit 28 • Alliston ON • L9R1E8 • Tel. (705) 435-4087 • Fax (705) 435-1051

From: Wilson-CO, Jim
Sent: October-13-17 9:03 AM
To: Wilson, Jim
Subject: FW: Urgent Request on the matter of the proposed closing of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility

From: susan@utopia.ca [<mailto:susan@utopia.ca>]
Sent: October 12, 2017 9:58 PM
To: Brown, Patrick <patrick.brown@pc.ola.org>; ahorwath-qp@ndp.on.ca; Wilson-CO, Jim
<jim.wilsonco@pc.ola.org>
Subject: Fwd: Urgent Request on the matter of the proposed closing of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility

Please find attached a copy of a letter on a very important issue. Your attention to this matter would be appreciated by us all.
Thank you.

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Urgent Request on the matter of the proposed closing of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility
Date: Thu, 12 Oct 2017 21:49:52 -0400
From: susan@utopia.ca
To: kwynn.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org, kmcgarry.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

Please find attached the request.
Your urgent attention is greatly appreciated.

susan

Susan Antler, chair
Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park
1-877-499-4255
www.utopia.on.ca



October 12, 2017

Premier Kathleen Wynne
Government of Ontario

Minister Kathryn McGarry
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

RE: Proposed Closure of MNRF's Ontario Tree Seed Facility in Angus, Essa Township, Ontario

Dear Premier Wynne and Minister McGarry,

We are writing regards to the recently announced permanent closure of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility in Angus, Essa Township, Ontario. A facility that, for the last 94 years, has well served the needs of the forests and the people of Ontario.

A well-attended public meeting was held last evening at the Utopia Hall in Essa Township (see attachment). Those in attendance included Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry representatives, AWARE Essa, Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park, FORESTS ONTARIO, Elected Officials (Essa Township, Springwater Township, Legislature of Ontario), Corporate Citizens (eg. Somerville Nursery) and many individuals. All of us were shocked by the lack of public consultation before the announcement was made a few weeks ago AND by the announced closure date of September 2018.

Premier and Minister We are requesting that the normal consultative process, for which you and the Ontario Government are known for, be immediately put in place to determine the future of this storied facility. A facility which has played a significant role in our Province where, thanks to the existence of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility, deserts, created by human activity, were brought back into the green forested areas that we have today (a story told by many including John Bacher in his book on the legacy of the then Chief Forester of Ontario, Edmund Zavitz: TWO BILLION TREES and COUNTING (2011)).

We respectfully request that:

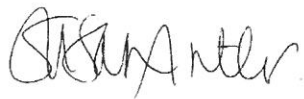
1. Any actions on the closure of the Ontario Tree Seed Facility be immediately put on hold pending the outcome of a consultative process;
2. A Stakeholders Committee be constituted as soon as possible with membership that would include: FORESTS ONTARIO, AWARE Essa, Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park, MNRF representatives, experts in the field and Corporate representatives;

3. This Stakeholder Committee report no later than 4 months from the date of it being constituted by yourselves. Such a report to include alternate modes of delivery, including a non-profit entity, with the objective of possibly relieving ongoing operating expenses presently incurred by the Government of Ontario with regards to this facility; and
4. That an emergency meeting be convened through your good offices of our representatives and yourselves within the next two weeks.

Premier and Minister, we strongly believe that there is time to do a proper consultation process as we are proposing while achieving your (artificially set) deadlines.

As this is an urgent matter, we would like to thank you in advance for your expeditious reply.

Sincerely,



Susan Antler, chair
Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park

cc: Patrick Brown, Leader of the Official Opposition
Andrea Horwath, Leader of the New Democratic Party
Jim Wilson, MPP
Mayor Terry Dowdall & Council, Essa Township
Councillor Katy Austin, Springwater Township
FORESTS ONTARIO
AWARE Essa
Interested Media

The Ontario Tree Seed Facility is being closed

What is the Reason for the Closure?

Why Should We Care?

YOU are INVITED to a PUBLIC MEETING

**to discuss the Ministry of Natural Resource's Decision
to close the Historic Ontario Tree Seed Facility**

Keynote Speaker: Ken Durst, Regional Services Manager

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)

With Additional Representatives from the MNR

DATE: Wednesday October 11, 2017

TIME: 7pm

LOCATION: Utopia Hall (8396 6th Line, Utopia)

Established in 1923, the Ontario Tree Seed Facility:

- stores approximately 5 billion viable seeds with over 70% of the inventory being storage for clients
 - supplies select varieties of tree and shrub seed to tree nurseries and the general public, storing seed for forest industry clients as well
 - provides seed purchasing options for small reforestation initiatives such as the "50 Million Tree Program"
- SOURCE: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

A leader in the conservation of Ontario's forest biodiversity

Seed management is the foundation of any successful forest restoration program.

With the help of the Ontario Tree Seed Plant, high-quality, locally adapted seed is available to ensure planting projects thrive.

Friends of the
UTOPIA
Gristmill & Park

 **AWARE**
Essa
Elect to Protect!