



Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

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NEWS RELEASE

NEW CHAIR ELECTED, 2010 PRIORITIES ESTABLISHED

Eastern Ontario Wardens elect new Chair, Vice Chair
And set 2010-priorities

January 19, 2010

NEWS

The Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus Inc. has elected Dave Burton, Warden of Haliburton County as its new Chair for the coming year. He replaces last year's Chair Ron Emond, Warden of Hastings County. Bill Thake, Warden of United Counties of Leeds and Grenville was elected as Vice-Chair for 2010.

Each January the 13 members of the EOWC review their activities from the previous year and set their priorities for the coming year. Last week the members met in Kingston for two days to conduct this important task.

The EOWC Inc. was also able to share its 2010 priorities with M.P.s and M.P.P.s from across Eastern Ontario, including Rick Norlock, M.P. Northumberland-Quinte West, the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, M.P.P. Prince Edward-Hastings and Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Honourable John Gerretsen, M.P.P. Kingston and the Islands and Minister of the Environment and Interim Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Lou Rinaldi, M.P.P. Northumberland-Quinte West and Rick Johnson, M.P.P. Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock who were in attendance on January 15th.

QUOTES

Warden Burton stated "I am honoured to be elected as Chair of the EOWC Inc. We have accomplished a lot over the past year under the leadership of Ron Emond and I look forward to working with the Caucus to achieve our 2010 priorities."

"As we do each year, our January session is a time when new wardens are welcomed as members of the Caucus," stated Warden Burton. "As well, the

incoming and outgoing wardens look forward to the year ahead and set the direction for the Caucus in terms of the key issues that we will be promoting to both the federal and provincial governments,” added Warden Burton.

“This year we are continuing our focus on economic development”, stated Chair Burton. “It is important to keep the EOWC in front of the decision makers at the Federal and Provincial levels of Government with accurate information about our priorities, what we have accomplished and what remains outstanding.”

FACTS – 2010 Priorities

The following three priorities will be advanced by the EOWC Inc. in 2010:

Economic Development

- Lobby the Province of Ontario to start the process towards developing a Growth Plan for Eastern Ontario that has an economic development focus
- Champion an Eastern Ontario Economic Summit through collaboration with the Ontario East Economic Development Commission, Province of Ontario and First Nations
- Update the Eastern Ontario Regional Data Set that was initially compiled in 2007 as part of the Eastern Ontario Rural Policy Project that was completed in partnership with the CFDCs of Eastern Ontario and the Eastern Ontario Economic Development Commission.
- Improve the Eastern Ontario Development Fund’s eligibility criteria for Small Businesses

Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN) – Building the Network

This multimillion dollar project seeks to ensure that at least 95% of all people in the region get access with capacity to the Internet. This is a key building block in ensuring Eastern Ontario’s future prosperity.

- o Work towards finalizing a Contribution Agreement with the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario
- o Expect to start network construction in 2010 after the Contribution Agreement and contracts are executed.

Mitigation Funding – Dealing with the Financial Impacts

Need to establish the financial impact on EOWC members of the recent decision by the Ontario Government to phase out the Mitigation Component of the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund over a two-year period starting in 2010.

- Prepare further reports for the Province on the financial impact of this funding decision to EOWC members

Other ongoing projects for 2010 include:

Lobby the Ontario Government to update the current Land Ambulance Dispatch System in order to improve better response times, reduce costs and provide better data to EMS providers.

Develop a better profile with First Nations Communities as part of the Algonquin Land Claim that hopefully will lead to partnering opportunities

Research and advocate on behalf of the EOWC long term care funding and regulatory issues

As in previous years, the EOWC will be making recommendations to the Federal Government and the Ontario Government through the respective 2010 Pre-Budget submission process.

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For more information contact:

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