



News Release

For Immediate Release

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Auditor General of Ontario Appoints Commissioner of the Environment

(TORONTO) Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk is pleased to announce the appointment of Jerry V. DeMarco as an Assistant Auditor General, assuming the duties of Commissioner of the Environment. DeMarco will join the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario on August 1, 2019.

“Mr. DeMarco will be an excellent addition to our team,” Lysyk said. She added that as Commissioner, DeMarco will lead audits with the Office’s newly formed environment team. The team’s priority will be holding the government accountable for its responsibilities under the *Environmental Bill of Rights* and for provincial programs intended to protect the environment.

DeMarco is one of Canada’s leading experts in environmental policy and law. In addition to his undergraduate degree (B.A., Windsor), he has a background in science (M.Sc., Toronto), management (M.M., McGill), environmental planning (M.E.S., York; MCIP) and law (LL.B., Toronto). Early in his career, he was the managing lawyer of a charitable environmental law organization, where he helped set some of Canada’s most important environmental law precedents before the Supreme Court of Canada.

For the past 14 years, DeMarco has served as an impartial adjudicator of environmental disputes and, for the past nine years, he has overseen the Ontario Environmental Review Tribunal, which was recently recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme for its best practices. He has presided over hundreds of public environmental hearings and issued nearly 300 written decisions, with none overturned by the courts. He is the author of numerous articles on a range of topics on environmental protection and law for a wide variety of books and journals, and was the first recipient of the City of Toronto’s award for environmental leadership.

“I’m excited to join the Auditor General and her team in this new role,” DeMarco said. “I have great respect for the work this Office has done to date to improve environmental programs in Ontario, and I look forward to working with a strong team continuing the great work that informs the Legislature and promotes improvements.”

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario has a long history of auditing environmental programs and issues. Since 1978, when it began conducting value-for-money audits, the Office has completed 35 environmental audits. Recent topics have included source water protection (2014), management of contaminated sites (2015), climate change (2016), environmental approvals (2016), environmental assessments (2016) and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (2018).

The Office of the Auditor General of Ontario assumed new environmental responsibilities on April 1, 2019 under the *Restoring Trust, Transparency and Accountability Act, 2018*. The Act transferred many of the responsibilities of the Office of the Environmental Commissioner to the Auditor General’s Office. The role of Commissioner of the Environment, created by the Act, is designated as an Assistant Auditor General, reporting directly to the Auditor General.

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