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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OPINION

# Peterborough letter: Protect Ontario turtles where they live

Highway expansion poses a risk to wildlife in the area.

Tue., March 22, 2022 | 2 min. read

## Ontario government shells out \$250K more for Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre's work, March 12

In what has to be one of the most transparent, manipulative, and shallow bids ever devised for votes, the shameless Davids — Piccini and Smith, are at their headline-grabbing worst on the front page of the March 12 Examiner.

If Piccini really wants to do anything for turtles, and if Smith really does have a special and sensible place in his heart for the Peterborough area's wilderness wonders, then protect turtles where they live, not after they've been hit by a car.

My "I Brake For Turtles" bumper sticker is a little tattered. I wear my vintage Turtle Trauma Centre T-shirt with pride. I loudly applaud the Centre's efforts. But this Conservative government can't pave over our wetlands fast enough, and in weakening environmental protections has deferred to big business at every turn. You don't curb turtle roadkill by building more roads. And so far, Piccini has proven himself abysmally qualified to "educate the public on how to protect endangered species."

If Ford's cronies build Highway 413 it will cost billions of dollars and billions of natural lives; many of those lives will be turtles. The \$4.5 million? — Window-dressing tokenism. Pretty gates to the graveyard.

As I understand it, Piccini and his Ministry could save not only the Catchacoma old growth Hemlock in the northern part of Peterborough County, but the several species-at-risk (including the blandings turtle) that depend on that unspoiled wilderness for survival. He could do that with the stroke of a pen. David Smith has been photographed on site, and it is in his backyard. Catchacoma is low-hanging fruit. But despite the pro-preservation studies and science that have been well documented in these pages, there is no evidence that either Dave has done anything meaningful to save the old-growth Catchacoma Forest.

This government is in dire need of credible and substantive action to protect the environment.

But if this vote-grabbing publicity stunt ranks among Piccini's best efforts to save the natural world, let's say a requiem for Mother Nature right now.

*Peter Currier, Wolsely Street*

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