

Via email to: keith.ashfield@parl.gc.ca



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March 24, 2012

Member of Parliament Keith Ashfield

Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Communications Branch
200 Kent Street
13th Floor, Station 13E228
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Dear Mr. Ashfield, and fellow Members of Parliament,

As a representative of waterfront communities across Ontario, and a lifelong advocate for sustainable development and healthy waterfront communities, I am writing to register my extreme concern about the changes being contemplated in the upcoming budget pertaining to the powers in the Fisheries Act.

Removing the habitat protection provisions in section 35 of the Act significantly hampers the regulatory opportunities to drive sustainable development, and puts our most valuable resource, water, under significant threat. It is impossible to protect fish without also protecting their habitat.

In this era of growing concerns about our aquatic resources, it is surely unwise to remove one of the few tools available to ensure their integrity.

If the Federal government intends on fulfilling the commitment to a prosperous, sustainable and healthy future, you must retain the legislative and regulatory means to do so.

I would be happy to meet with you and discuss the importance of the Fisheries Act, and how the regulatory role of the Federal government is essential to the 250,000 families that own waterfront property in rural Ontario, and the 500 community organizations represented through the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Rees". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terry" and last name "Rees" clearly distinguishable.

Terry Rees, Executive Director
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