

**Ministry  
of the  
Environment**

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**SEP 06 2007**

Mr. Paul Mennill, President  
Mr. John Gillespie, Past President  
Bluewater Shoreline Residents' Association (BSRA)  
GMB 411, RR1  
Zurich ON NOM 2T0

Dear Mr. Mennill and Mr. Gillespie:

I received a copy of your June 20, 2007 letter to Premier McGuinty regarding BSRA's Water Quality Report. I am pleased to respond to you on behalf of our government.

The May 2007 Report highlights BSRA's continued efforts in refining the report from October 2006, which we were able to discuss during our meeting last December. Some of the observations and recommendations provided in this report remain similar to those previously identified. My March 22, 2007 letter responds to those concerns and remains relevant to your letter of June 20, 2007.

I want to assure you that our government is committed to ensuring all of Ontario's aquifers, streams and lakes are protected, including the Great Lakes. I congratulate you on the work that the BSRA has undertaken to address water quality issues and ongoing testing and reporting of water quality results for the beaches and ravines of Lake Huron in the Municipality of Bluewater. I understand that staff from my ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Environment Canada and the Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority, who are involved with the Southeast Shore Working Group, met with representatives from your Association to share information about ongoing research efforts in the area, and that further meetings are planned to discuss these ongoing efforts.

With respect to inter-jurisdictional accountability and the Great Lakes, many of Ontario's efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes are coordinated with the Government of Canada through the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA). Effective June 25, 2007, Ontario and Canada entered into an enhanced COA to March 2010 (copy enclosed). The 2007 COA establishes specific goals and results assigned to either the federal government or provincial government, or in some cases, jointly. This clear delineation of responsibilities will assist in providing accountability to the public. Of particular relevance to your concerns are provisions in the 2007 COA with respect to Lake and Basin Sustainability (Annex 3, Result 2.2) which provides for actions to reduce non-point source pollutants in priority watersheds within the Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie drainage basins.

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The 2007 COA builds on success under the 2002 Agreement in cleaning up toxic hot spots in the Great Lakes (Areas of Concern), reducing harmful pollutants, improving water quality, conserving fish and wildlife species and habitats, lessening the threat of aquatic invasive species and improving land management practices within the Great Lakes Basin. The Ontario Budget committed \$32.4 million in enhanced funding for the term of the 2007 COA in addition to regular programs.

Going forward, the governments of Canada and Ontario are initiating a broader dialogue to develop a common direction and actions to achieve Great Lakes sustainability beyond 2010. This will begin with the launch of a forum in the fall of 2007 which will engage the Great Lakes community, including municipalities, Aboriginal communities, non-governmental organizations, other Great Lakes experts and the interested public, such as your Association.

Ontario recognizes the importance of collaboration and clarity of responsibility among governments that share the mandate for Great Lakes protection. As you may know, Ontario is actively engaged in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement review, recognizing the importance of a renewed bi-national commitment to the Great Lakes.

With respect to the need for strong provincial legislation to protect the environment, I am pleased that the Premier has outlined the *Safeguarding and Sustaining Ontario's Water Act* and the *Clean Water Act, 2006* (CWA). As part of the CWA, local communities will develop source protection plans using a science-based approach to protecting water supplies. I urge you to be involved in the development of the local plan for your community.

Thank you, again, for writing and I trust this information is helpful.

Yours truly,



Laurel C. Broten  
Minister of the Environment

Enclosure: Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem

c: The Honourable Dalton McGuinty, Premier (CSU #600592)  
The Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources  
The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
Ms. Carol Mitchell, MPP, Huron-Bruce  
Mr. John Tory, MPP, Leader, Progressive Conservative Party  
Mr. Howard Hampton, MPP, Leader, New Democratic Party  
Ms. Laurie Scott, MPP, PC Critic for the Environment