

June 27, 2016

Hon. Kathryn McGarry
Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry
Whitney Block, Room 6630
99 Queens Park Circle
Toronto, ON
M7A 1W3

RE: Congratulations/Water Level Management on the Muskoka Lakes

Dear Minister McGarry,

The Muskoka Lakes Association [MLA] wishes to congratulate you on your recent appointment. We look forward to the opportunity to congratulate you in person and to continue the relationship with your Ministry initiated earlier this year and previously, particularly in 2013.

By way of introduction, the MLA is a lake association representing some 2,300 waterfront property owners on the Muskoka Lakes about 200 km North of Toronto. Spring flooding this year has led us to enter discussions with your Ministry aimed at averting a future repeat of the damages sustained this year to lakeside residents in Muskoka as has three out of the past four Springs.

After what we believed was a good start to discussions on how to mitigate the risks of future flooding and damage to Muskoka Lakes' shoreline properties, we are disappointed to have progress sidelined by potential legal issues. This letter is to clarify that the Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) is not a party to any pending legal action. We do, however, believe that progress towards a long-term solution continues through productive discussions. We stand ready to resume communications as soon as this can be accomplished with your Ministry. If there is any action or assurance that we can provide to facilitate this, please let us know.

As a result of the flooding, the MLA created a Water Level Task Force, to work collaboratively with MNRF to resolve the problem. In previous meetings/correspondence with MNRF, the MLA wishes to accomplish protection for its shoreline property owner members through a three point action plan:

1. Lower water levels in Lake Muskoka, Lake Rosseau and Lake Joseph to the lower limits of their respective Normal Operating Zones by March 15th of each year until a new acceptable Muskoka River Water Management Plan (MRWMP) is implemented.
2. Initiate a process to revise the MRWMP as soon as possible.
3. Allow the MLA to be one of the participating parties to create the new MRWMP.

During earlier discussions primarily with the MNRF former Chief of Staff, Brent McCurdy and Senior Policy Advisor, Thinesh Varatharajah, we have received your Ministry's support for point three, above. Although progress has been delayed by the changes to cabinet, we are excited to get discussions restarted. Your Ministry's commitment to ongoing discussions indicated [to us] support for reaching some solution to our point's one and two. We look forward to resuming this productive relationship at your earliest convenience.

We assume you will have received all the files and notes from Minister Mauro's team, prior to transition. For convenience we have attached a copy of our executive presentation about the Muskoka region flooding and our request. This includes detailed damage survey information and facts from your ministry and the Ministry of Environment official water level tracking.

All best wishes with your new responsibilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael Hart".

Michael Hart
President

CC.

Josh Arnold, Acting Chief of Staff, MNRF
Brent McCurdy, Former Chief of Staff, MNRF
Thinesh Varatharajah, Sr. Policy Advisor
MLA Water Level Task Force