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The Honourable Jeff Yurek
Minister of the Environment Conservation and Parks
777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

September 4th, 2019

Dear Minister:

Re: Monitoring Compliance of Sewage Works in Muskoka

We are writing to you today after becoming aware of the sewage spill at the JW Marriot Hotel on June 30th and July 1st of this year. We received a copy of the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks Provincial Officers Order and Report and learned through it, that there have been other incidents with their sewage works that have not been acted upon after interactions with Ministry officials.

The Muskoka Lakes Association represents approximately 2500 families in the Muskoka Lakes with our mission to preserve Muskoka for future generations. We conduct water quality testing throughout the Muskoka Lakes for total phosphorus and bacteria in order to flag areas of concern for greater investigation. For the most part the water quality in Muskoka is excellent and it is our mission to ensure it remains that way. Our sampling has detected water quality problems in Wallace Bay near the resorts over the years that we have identified to relevant officials.

Systems that have been put in place for sewage treatment under the approval of the MECP must be subject to routine inspections and follow up should issues be identified. We are concerned that the Ministry has not maintained the resources over the years of budget cuts to ensure that the systems are adequately inspected and issues managed. We seek your assurance that in this time of fiscal restraint that the government will continue to provide sufficient resources to be able to continue follow up with the JW Marriot, and indeed any other such systems in Muskoka.

Minister, you have kindly pledged \$5 million dollars to be invested in Muskoka to “allow the community and the province to work together to protect this vital area”. This includes infrastructure in place to protect the environment. Please continue to support us with your vital inspection and enforcement activities.

Sincerely,

Lawton Osler
President

c.c. Phil Harding, Mayor, Township of Muskoka Lakes
John Klinck, Chair, District of Muskoka
Norm Miller, MPP, Parry Sound - Muskoka