



June 9, 2014

Lynette Mader  
Manager, Provincial Operations – Ontario  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
[du\\_barrie@ducks.ca](mailto:du_barrie@ducks.ca)

Dear Ms. Mader,

Thank you for providing the Ontario Liberals an opportunity to describe our party's commitment to protect and preserve Ontario's wetlands.

One of the cornerstones of the Ontario Liberal plan is achieving sustainable and livable communities. Ontario Liberals believe that strong leadership means investing in clean, healthy, sustainable communities. With our growing population, it is more important than ever to protect our vital resources like clean water, clean air, farmland and green spaces. We need to grow in ways that sustain healthy lifestyles and a healthy environment. To this end, the Kathleen Wynne administration has pledged that by 2025 the loss of wetlands in our province will be reversed.

To achieve this goal, we need to continue in strengthening partnerships with key stakeholders and conservation groups - such as Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC). In the last decade, our partnership with DUC has resulted in the conservation of more than 16,500 hectares of wetlands and associated habits. These wetlands are recognized as a resource of great ecological, economic, cultural and recreational value.

To support DUC's conservation efforts, the Ontario Liberal government signed a 15 year Memorandum of Understanding with DUC to reaffirm our shared commitment to wetland conservation. This year, we signed a five-year agreement with DUC to make it easier for DUC to repair or build small, low-risk dams to help preserve waterfowl habitat.

The health and protection of Ontario's vast system of rivers, lakes and wetlands is and will continue to be a high priority for us if returned to government. Recently, Ontario Liberals have taken strong action to protect our natural environment and wetland ecosystems:

**Ontario Liberal Party**

10 St. Mary Street, Suite 210, Toronto, ON M4Y 1P9  
Phone: 416.961.3800, 1.800.268.7250 | Fax: 416.323.9425  
Email: [info@ontarioliberal.com](mailto:info@ontarioliberal.com) | Web: [www.ontarioliberal.ca](http://www.ontarioliberal.ca)



- On February 25, 2013 the Ontario Liberal government reintroduced the *Great Lakes Protection Act*, to ensure the Great Lakes remain drinkable, swimmable and fishable. The proposed Act would provide the government with new tools to protect beaches, wetlands and other coastal areas as well as the waterways that flow into them. Regrettably, due to Progressive Conservative delay tactics the proposed Act did not make it through Committee. If returned to government, we will reintroduce this legislation so Ontarians may continue to enjoy the benefits of our Great Lakes and associated wetlands for generations to come;
- We support and fund the Ontario Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund, which enables community organizations and groups to restore and protect their corner of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River basin through small-scale projects such as, restoring wetlands, creating habitat for fish, and tackling invasive species. The 2014 Guardian Fund is slated to provide a total of \$1.79 million in grants of up to \$25,000 each to eligible groups; and
- We are taking steps to streamline the approval process under the Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act. We have proposed regulatory changes to make dam owners more accountable for operating decisions that may affect social, economic and environmental interests, increase public disclosure around an owner's compliance record, and improve service delivery.

The Ontario Liberal plan also commits to tackling algae problems in the Great Lakes. By continuing to work with the agricultural sector, we will develop financial incentives to reduce nutrient runoff. We will work with municipalities to improve sewage and stormwater management and we will also work with Ontario Parks to make Great Lakes beaches cleaner and safer.

If returned to government, an Ontario Liberal government would undertake an inter-ministerial review of our current wetland policy, with an aim to consolidate information and identify issues and opportunities related to wetland conservation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kathleen Wynne'.

Kathleen Wynne  
Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party  
Premier