



SSJI South Shore Joint Initiative



March 21, 2018

The Honourable Nathalie Des Rosiers,
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
Suite 6630, 6th Floor, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3

The Honourable Catherine McKenna
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Des Rosiers and Minister McKenna,

Re: Protected areas for Prince Edward County's South Shore and Lake Ontario

We are writing to request a meeting with each of your staffs to discuss an exciting opportunity for the Government of Ontario and the Government of Canada to make an important contribution towards achieving Target 1 of Canada's 2020 Biodiversity Goals and Target 13 of the Ontario Biodiversity Strategy (to protect at least 17 percent of terrestrial areas and inland waters) in southern Ontario where biodiversity is greatest and conservation opportunities are extremely limited.

Prince Edward County's South Shore is an area of significant terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity that has been recognized as a globally significant Important Bird and Biodiversity Area and an International Monarch Butterfly Reserve. Despite its significant biodiversity, the only protected area along the South Shore is Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area at the southeastern end. The remaining public lands (Point Petre Provincial Wildlife Area and Ostrander Point Crown Land Block) are open to industrial

development and unregulated access resulting in negative impacts on natural cover and sensitive wildlife.

We are working together as a collaborative of local, provincial and national organizations along with local government to secure protection for Prince Edward County's South Shore. Local organizations and individuals have come together as The South Shore Joint Initiative (SSJI) to coordinate the local voice for the protection of the Prince Edward County South Shore Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (South Shore IBA).

We were all very heartened with the recent bold step taken by the Government of Canada in announcing \$1.3 billion in funding for biodiversity conservation, a major component of which is to achieve our international commitment to achieving our protected areas targets.

We strongly believe that the governments of Ontario and Canada working collaboratively could result in protection for over 1,500 hectares of Provincial Crown land under the Ontario *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* and extensive protection for the Lake Ontario shoreline and offshore waters as a National Marine Conservation Area under the [Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act](#). These protected areas would contribute to achieving the target of protecting 17 percent of lands and inland waters which your governments are working towards.

We call on you to move swiftly to advance legal protection for the South Shore's land and waters using the mechanisms within each of your jurisdictions, such as the Ontario *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*, and *the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act and the Canada Wildlife Act*. A Provincial Park or Conservation Reserve encompassing the south shore's provincial Crown lands will add invaluable protected area to an ecoregion that is woefully under-represented (less than one percent). A National Marine Conservation Area that includes the shoreline and offshore areas of Prince Edward County is urgently needed to achieve the goal of protecting Lake Ontario's marine heritage for present and future generations as laid out in the national system plan, *Sea to Sea to Sea*. A strengthened or expanded National Wildlife Area could also contribute to vision and target. Importantly, there is huge public support for protection of the South Shore locally and provincially.

The enclosed proposal for protection of the South Shore was compiled by SSJI to provide the specific information that substantiates the case for protection. We also enclose a letter of support for this initiative from Prince Edward County Council.

We look forward to hearing from each of you very soon regarding this opportunity. We will follow up to arrange meetings with your respective staff.

Yours sincerely,

Sandra Dowds

Sandra Dowds
President
Prince Edward County Field
Naturalist



Peter Fuller
President
Prince Edward Point Bird
Observatory



Stewart Murray, President
Hastings Prince Edward Land
Trust



John Hirsch
Director
CCSAGE Naturally Green



Richard Copple
President
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Enclosures:

- SSJI proposal for protection of the South Shore
- Letter of support from Prince Edward County