

July 18, 2013

The Hon. Lisa Raitt
Minister of Transport
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Minister Raitt:

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Transport. We are writing to inform you of our recent correspondence with Minister Lebel and the commitments he made to protect the Ojibway Shores property in Windsor, an undeveloped natural area adjacent to the future site of the Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) plaza. This property is owned by the Government of Canada and managed by the Windsor Port Authority (WPA)

The Ojibway Shores property has significant regional ecological importance. It is critical habitat and represents the last remaining opportunity to ecologically link the Detroit River to the internationally significant Ojibway Prairie and Oak Savannah complex. To allow any type of development to go forward would devastate the closed canopy forest and associated ecosystem and set back the Remedial Action Plan process under the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes' Water Quality Agreement in restoring, enhancing and protecting the Detroit River ecosystem. Finally, the development of Ojibway Shores would directly undermine Transport Canada's Environmental Management Planning process that will fulfill the Department's commitments required by the environmental assessment approval for the DRIC.

In a June 11, 2013 letter to the Detroit River Canadian Public Advisory Council (PAC), Mr. Lebel wrote: "Please be assured that Transport Canada has no intention of using Ojibway Shores land to accept fill for the Detroit River International Crossing Project." Following a public meeting on July 3 Minister Lebel, with support from the public and other groups, managed to convince the WPA to postpone their plans to clear cut the property for development. For its part the WPA has agreed to consult environmental groups to identify conservation alternatives for the site.

The Detroit River Canadian PAC is comprised of individuals with an interest in protecting the health of the Detroit River ecosystem. The PAC provides a route through which the public can provide input on the remediation of the Detroit River and is the coordinated voice of several, local non-governmental organizations. We look forward to working with Transport Canada on the upcoming Environmental Management Planning process for the DRIC project. Please provide the contact information for the staff person working on the DRIC file so that we may continue to be involved in and obtain more details on the mitigation process.

Although the green future of Ojibway Shores is by no means certain, recent statements by the WPA and Transport Canada are encouraging. Thank you. Please direct correspondence to Derek Coronado (dcoronado@cogeco.net; 519-973-1116).

Sincerely,



Tom Henderson, Chair
Detroit River Canadian PAC



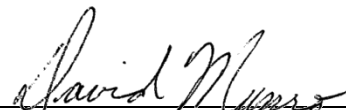
Derek Coronado, Coordinator
Citizens Environment Alliance



Jesse Costa-Gardner, President
Essex County Field Naturalists' Club



Marcia Valiante, Member
Detroit River Canadian PAC



David Munro, Member
Little River Enhancement Group

CC. MP Brian Masse, MP Jeff Watson, WPA Board of Directors, ERCA, PAC Members