

CANADIAN

AQUATIC RESOURCES SECTION



SECTION DES RESSOURCES AQUATIQUES  
CANADIENNES

April 9 2016

Hon. Hunter Tootoo, Minister  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada  
200 Kent Street, 13th Floor, Station 13E228  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Tootoo:

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Canadian Aquatic Resources Section (CARS) of the American Fisheries Society (AFS). With over 9,000 members, AFS is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources. Our section represents over 300 Canadian fisheries professionals, including scientists, fisheries managers, consultants, students and representatives from public, private, and non-for-profit sectors.

The Canadian Aquatic Resources Section wishes to express our support for your plans to review recent changes to the *Fisheries Act*, restore lost protections, and incorporate modern safeguards. Our fisheries are an integral part of Canada's economy and culture, and we support all efforts to protect and restore them. As professionals who interact with colleagues around the globe, we know that the *Fisheries Act* and associated habitat policies and management activities conducted by Fisheries and Oceans Canada were once seen as a global model for fisheries conservation. The proposed review provides an excellent opportunity to reclaim this global leadership while protecting and enhancing our natural resource. It also provides an opportunity to identify which recent changes were beneficial, which require amending, and what new regulatory tools or approaches could be added to the Act with the goal of protecting and restoring freshwater and marine fish habitat. Canadians derive many benefits from conserving our fisheries and the habitat that sustains them. Healthy waters are of great importance to the social and economic well-being of Canadian society and the protection of fish habitat is an important part of ensuring abundant aquatic resources for future generations.

We applaud your commitment to open government and wish to contribute to your efforts to review and improve the *Fisheries Act*. Our Canadian fisheries scientists are global leaders in understanding relationships among human activities, environmental conditions, habitats and fish populations. Our fisheries managers and consultants have spent their careers applying regulations to protect fisheries and offer a wealth of expertise. We would be pleased to provide assistance to the government and specifically to Fisheries and Oceans Canada to improve the regulatory process.

Mark Poesch, President  
Canadian Aquatic Resources Section-AFS

cc.  
Office of the Prime Minister  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON, K1A 0A2