

# News Release Communiqué



Ministry of Natural Resources

Ministère des Richesses naturelles

For Immediate Release  
July 25, 2007

## ONTARIO INVOLVES STAKEHOLDERS IN MANAGING LAKE SIMCOE FISHERIES

### *Volunteer Committee To Advise Ministry And Boost Stewardship*

AURORA — The Ontario government is strengthening the management of one of Ontario's most important fisheries resources by establishing a committee of fisheries stakeholders for Lake Simcoe, Natural Resources Minister David Ramsay announced today.

"Lake Simcoe has a world-class fishery and is the most intensively fished inland lake in Ontario," said Ramsay. "Under the government's new science-based ecological approach to fisheries management, we want to ensure a variety of interested groups and partners are involved as we move forward to manage, conserve and enhance this valuable resource."

Lake Simcoe is a popular fishing destination, and the fisheries are important to local economies. The lake's fish communities are being affected by changes to the ecology of the lake, including the arrival of invasive species and the growth of aquatic plants in near-shore areas.

As part of the new Ecological Framework for Recreational Fisheries Management in Ontario, the ministry is seeking to involve a wide range of stakeholders in managing Ontario's fisheries resources. The goal of the Lake Simcoe Fisheries Stakeholder Committee will be to recommend ways to improve the fisheries of Lake Simcoe and Lake Couchiching and their watersheds, such as projects to restore or enhance fish habitat. The committee will also advise Ministry of Natural Resources district managers on matters such as changes to fishing regulations and fish stocking.

The ongoing work of the committee to improve the local fisheries will complement future efforts to protect the health of Lake Simcoe, such as the proposed new Lake Simcoe Act that Premier Dalton McGuinty recently announced would be developed and implemented. The new act would:

- Raise the bar on sewage treatment standards and set strict limits on pollutants such as phosphorus
- Create a governance structure as recommended by the Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy Working Group, and
- Promote recreational opportunities while protecting the health of the lake.

Encouraging the involvement of interested groups in the stewardship of Lake Simcoe fisheries is just one way the McGuinty government is achieving results in the protection of biodiversity and natural resources. Other initiatives include:

- Working in partnership with conservation organizations, sponsors, community groups and individuals to restore Atlantic salmon, a native species, to Lake Ontario and its watersheds
- Investing \$15.5 million over three years to reconstruct and expand the Dorion Fish Culture Station which provides yearling fish for waters across northwest Ontario and eggs for other provincial hatcheries
- Providing \$2 million to the Trees Ontario Foundation. The foundation intends to plant 1.8 million trees on the Greenbelt by 2010.

#### Contacts:

Media calls only:  
Anne-Marie Flanagan  
Minister's Office  
416-327-0654

Barry Radford  
Communications Services Branch  
416-314-0652

Disponible en français

[ontario.ca/mnr](http://ontario.ca/mnr)