



# Kawartha Lake Stewards Association

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March 14, 2019

Honourable Rod Phillips  
Ontario Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks  
College Park 5th Floor, 777 Bay St, Toronto, ON M7A 2J3  
rod.phillipsco@pc.ola.org

SENT VIA EMAIL

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the Kawartha Lake Stewards Association, I am writing this letter to express the need for the Ontario government's continued support for the Lake Partner Program (LPP).

First a little about ourselves: The Kawartha Lake Stewards Association (KLSA) is a volunteer, non-profit, community based organization of cottagers, year-round residents and local businesses formed to monitor the water quality of the Kawartha Lakes, to educate the public and to conduct research in areas of concern. KLSA is now in its 19th year of operation and has developed links to governments, academic institutions, conservation authorities, First Nations and many local organizations. The Kawartha continuum – the area we monitor, includes 16 lakes, with over 60 volunteers. Our membership list includes over 550 names.

As you are aware, phosphorus is a limiting nutrient in most of Ontario's waterways, and if not controlled, can lead to environmental degradation and human health concerns. The Ontario government has worked diligently by investing millions of dollars, to investigate, manage and mitigate the consequences of acute cultural eutrophication occurring in Ontario (for example, Lake Erie, Lake Simcoe and others).

For KLSA, the LPP is not merely a data collection exercise. Here in the Kawarthas, the information collected by the LPP program has been used in a number of ways including:

- (i) Each year the LPP data is assembled, collated, interpreted and presented in our annual report. In April 2015 KLSA used the information collected by LPP and presented a synopsis of the past 12 years observing the trends (see: Dolbey M. 2015. *Analysis of Ontario Lake Partner Program - Total Phosphorus Data for the Kawartha Lakes*. Kawartha Lake Stewards Association 2014 Lake Water Quality Report, <https://klsa.wordpress.com>);
- (ii) Based on these data, KLSA with our partners undertook a research study with Queen's University to evaluate phosphorus concentrations over the past two centuries; and
- (iii) The total phosphorus trend data has been used to develop action plans in a number of lake management plans prepared by Kawartha Conservation and others; and
- (iv) Total phosphorus trend data is used by cottage associations to focus on shoreline protection and modify lakeshore owners' behaviour by reducing phosphorus lake loadings.

Moreover, this program is a stellar example of citizen science at its best whereby the collaboration of lake associations and the Ontario government has developed a long term data base. This program operates at a



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modest cost and includes hundreds of volunteers, monitoring hundreds of lakes and sampling locations. Dr. David Lean, one of the foremost freshwater scientists in Canada, <https://research.uottawa.ca/people/lean-david> has noted that the Ontario phosphorus data set is one of the best in the world.

Therefore KLSA requests the Ontario government undertake the following actions:

1. Commit to funding and participating in the Lake Partner Program for the next five years.
2. Commit to maintaining the parameter list of analyses and possibly increasing the chemical analysis provided there is sufficient scientific evidence for the increase.
3. Commit to increasing the number of lakes and sampling locations based on credible scientific evidence and need.
4. Maintain the collection and report on lake water temperatures.
5. Work with citizen science organizations like KLSA, to undertake applicable relevant studies and develop sound management policies and mitigation strategies.

KLSA looks forward to your response and to working with your government to maintain and enhance lake water quality in the Kawartha Lakes.

Cordially

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