

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



*Ontario Conservation Centre*

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April 28, 2015  
OFAH File: 420S

Mr. Marc Desjardins  
Lake Ontario Fisheries Management Unit  
41 Fish Hatchery Lane, Rural Route #4  
Picton, Ontario  
K0K 2T0

Dear Marc:

**Subject: Proposed Stocking Plan for Canadian waters of Lake Ontario – EBR #012-3046**

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), its 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 725 member clubs, we are writing in strong support of the proposed stocking plan for the Canadian waters of Lake Ontario (EBR #012-3046). The draft stocking plan achieves a balance between restoration/conservation stocking of native species and the stocking of introduced non-native species for ecological balance in the lake's food web and recreational fisheries, both open-water and tributary.

Additional benefits that should be achieved through the stocking plan are improved Chinook Salmon stocking from rationalizing and prioritizing stocking methods and locations, focused Brown Trout fisheries from re-vamping the Brown Trout stocking program, and a formalized Coho Salmon stocking program delivered by stakeholders. Native species will also benefit under the stocking plan by addressing risk directly in the plan and recognizing these species' operational plans should be driven by science.

As you know, the OFAH has representatives on the advisory councils for Fisheries Management Zone (FMZ) 20's East and West Basins, and has provided comments on the stocking plan in its earlier draft stage(s) through the council. We are pleased to see the comments of the OFAH and other advisory council members have been incorporated into the current proposal.

At this time we would also like to formally respond to your specific questions from the questionnaire distributed at the recent public consultations:

**Chinook Salmon:**

1. We agree on the stocking location priorities of i) streams; ii) net pens; and iii) shoreline.
2. We agree the net pen program should be expanded where feasible and there is local interest from a host club.

3. We agree the existing shoreline locations should be reviewed in the near future, with any changes occurring by 2016 unless additional time is needed to develop a net pen as an alternative to shoreline stocking.

Rainbow Trout:

1. We agree that stocking should be into streams, not shorelines.
2. We agree that streams with healthy naturalized/wild populations of Rainbow Trout should not be stocked, with the caveat that monitoring should occur/continue to identify which streams have such populations and identify any changes over time.
3. We agree the Upper St. Lawrence River should not be stocked because of the recognized issue of straying into Quebec waters.

Brown Trout:

We support Option 2 – pulse stocking of 6-7 locations in alternate years. However, we would like to see ongoing monitoring of the Brown Trout fishery followed by a review of this stocking approach in approximately 10 years. We believe Option 1 (concentrating stocking in four areas) should be an alternative if Option 2 does not demonstrate success or we learn more about the Brown Trout fishery.

We would, however, like clarification on the proposed stocking locations for Brown Trout, specifically in the Toronto area – while the Toronto Harbour is listed on page 21 as a potential location, in Appendix 2 (page 30) only the Humber Bay area is identified as a Toronto site. We recommend a site in or near the Toronto Harbour be considered to support the North Shore Urban Recreational Fisheries Strategy.

Finally, we support club/stakeholder hatcheries having the opportunity to stock eastern Lake Ontario (Kingston area) with Brown Trout if there is interest, and ask that opportunities to stock below the first impassable barriers of rivers at the identified stocking locations be examined, to create some form of a local run.

Stocking Distribution:

We support the proposed distribution of stocked fish.

Additional Comments:

- On page 12, the Sub-Zone Descriptions for Sub-zones 4 and 5 exclude Ajax, and these descriptions differ from those on page 23 – we would like clarification as to which Sub-zone includes this municipality. The descriptions of sub-zone extents on pages 23 would benefit from further clarification when a location is mentioned in two different sub-zones. E.g. Is Pickering in sub-zone 4 or 5?
- We recommend the Lake Ontario Management Unit, with the FMZ 20 council, develop a more detailed and formal Walleye stocking plan for the Hamilton and Toronto Harbours, to provide security and future guidance for that program.

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- As the Lake Ontario fisheries lack a current and comprehensive socio-economic analysis, we recommend Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, agency partners, and the FMZ 20 council make developing and sustaining a socio-economic understanding of Lake Ontario's fisheries a priority.

The OFAH appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Lake Ontario stocking plan, and would be happy to provide further clarification of any of our comments.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Robinson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chris Robinson, M.Sc.

OFAH Atlantic Salmon Program Coordinator

OFAH Fisheries Management Zone 20 (West) Advisory Council Representative

/cjr

cc: OFAH Board of Directors  
OFAH Fisheries Advisory Committee  
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director  
Matt DeMille, OFAH Manager, Fish and Wildlife Services  
Tom Brooke, OFAH Fisheries Biologist  
OFAH Fish and Wildlife Staff