

# ONTARIO FEDERATION OF ANGLERS & HUNTERS



*Ontario Conservation Centre*

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OFAH FILE: 420I  
March 11, 2015

Ms. Vicki McKay  
Acting Management Biologist  
Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry  
Aylmer District  
615 John Street North  
Aylmer, Ontario  
N5H 2S8

Dear Ms. McKay

Re: Black's Dam Sanctuary Proposal

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) and its 100,000 members, subscribers and supporters, and 725 member clubs, we have reviewed the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's (MNRF) sanctuary proposal for Black's Dam, which we understand will extend from the downstream extent of Black's Dam to the north side of Simcoe Street in the town of Tillsonburg.

The OFAH acknowledges that the proposed Black's Dam Sanctuary will provide protection of optimal Rainbow Trout spawning habitat; however, we also recognize that there will be a loss of harvesting opportunities for other species (e.g. White Sucker), specifically from January 1 through to the Friday before the fourth Saturday in April.

Due to the loss of overall fishing opportunities, fishing sanctuaries that prohibit fishing for all species of fish should only be applied where absolutely required and where there is a well-defined need and purpose. Given the potential for spawning activities to be disrupted or unintended damage to salmonid redds or eggs to occur in this particular area, the OFAH believes the benefits associated with this seasonal sanctuary outweigh the interim loss of opportunity. The sanctuary will have a positive influence on the continued natural reproduction of Rainbow Trout in Lake Erie. The sanctuary will also allow for more effective enforcement in an area where spawning trout are extremely vulnerable to illegal harvest.

We would like to thank the MNRF for collaborating with local angling groups on this initiative, and hope that this cooperation continues into the future.

Yours in conservation,

Tom Brooke, M.Sc.  
Fisheries Biologist

TB/gh

cc: OFAH Zone J Executive  
Angelo Lombardo, OFAH Executive Director  
Matt DeMille, OFAH Manager, Fish & Wildlife Services  
Dawn Sucee, OFAH Fish and Wildlife Biologist