

From: [Byers, Rick](#)
To: [Byers, Rick](#)
Subject: Joint News Release - Ontario Supporting Projects to Protect the Great Lakes
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Ontario Supporting Projects to Protect the Great Lakes

Province partnering with Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association on local projects

For Immediate Release
July 26, 2023

BRUCE, GREY, HURON, OWEN SOUND — The Ontario government is investing \$6 million to support 30 multi-year projects that will help protect, conserve and restore the Great Lakes including the southeast shores of Lake Huron, Eastern Georgian Bay and Huron-Bruce. These investments will help reduce plastic litter, excess nutrients and road salt entering lakes, rivers and streams, advance climate resiliency, and make significant progress on restoring environmentally degraded areas of the Great Lakes.

“Our government is continuing to work with partners to ensure Ontario’s Great Lakes are protected,” said David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. “We’re very proud to be supporting projects that will improve water quality, reduce plastic and salt pollution and increase collaboration with farmers, Indigenous organizations and communities to help improve the Great Lakes.”

The projects are led by community groups, not-for profits, conservation authorities, universities and Indigenous organizations and communities across the province and support commitments in the [Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health](#) and [Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy](#).

Local Great Lakes restoration [projects](#) include:

- Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association - \$474,500

“This group of projects around the Lake Huron-Georgian Bay basin will help to enhance water quality and aquatic habitats, restore streams and a wetland, increase biodiversity, remove plastic waste and engage local First Nation communities to improve the ecosystem health of the Great Lakes,” said Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Rick Byers.

“Given the significant agriculture industry in Huron and Bruce Counties, a resilient agriculture and food industry has a direct co-relation to the health of our Great Lakes,” said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agricultural, Food and Rural Affairs. “Today’s announcement is another positive step in advancing best practices that support the goals outlined in Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy. We are taking a multi-ministry approach to positioning Ontario as ‘best in class’ when it comes to good stewardship and healthy ecosystem associated with our Great Lakes.”

Funding for the Great Lakes Program is part of the Ontario government’s \$14 million in annual investments to further

protect, conserve and restore the health of the Great Lakes and support the well-being of communities that rely on them.

QUICK FACTS

- Ontario's Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River shoreline is the longest freshwater coastline in the world measuring 10,000 kilometres, which is greater than the length of the Canada-U.S. border and almost equivalent to travelling one quarter of the way around the world.
- Ninety-nine per cent of Ontarians live in the Great Lakes Basin and 95 per cent of Ontario's agricultural lands are in the Great Lakes Basin.
- Areas of Concern are geographic locations in the Great Lakes identified in the mid-1980s because human activities had severely degraded water quality and ecosystem health in those specific areas.
- Working with the Great Lakes community partners, our government is making [progress on actions](#) included in [Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy](#), such as:
 - restoring 14 historically Areas of Concern around the Great Lakes
 - restoring and enhancing over 74,200 acres of wetlands across Ontario 330 projects and \$20 million in funding under the [Wetlands Conservation Partner Program](#) projects
 - expanding the [Great Lakes Waterfront Trail](#) so it now stretches over 3,600 kilometers and connects 155 communities, villages and First Nations communities
- Since 2018, the Ontario government has invested \$66.5 million in 552 projects to safeguard the Great Lakes. During that time, 31 environmental clean-up actions have taken place across 17 Areas of Concern in the Great Lakes.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Learn more about the [Great Lakes and its watersheds](#)
- Learn how the government is [Protecting the Great Lakes](#)
- [Learn more about how Ontario protects and recovers species at risk and how you can help](#)

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For further information, please contact:

MPP Rick Byers Constituency Office | 519-371-2421 | rick.byers@pc.ola.org

MPP Lisa Thompson Constituency Office | 519-523-4251 | lisa.thompsonco@pc.ola.org