

December 15, 2011

Mr. Michael Yee
Manager, Biology and Waters Quality
Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
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Dear Mr. Yee:

Re: *Heart's Desire Riparian Restoration Concept, October 28, 2011, Draft Report*

The Ottawa Valley Chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS-OV) has for the past four decades been involved in the protection and restoration of natural areas and connections between such areas throughout eastern Ontario and western Quebec. Rivers are a critical component of a connected natural landscape because they are important for fish and other wildlife and for their migration.

CPAWS-OV has reviewed the draft *Heart's Desire Riparian Restoration Concept* document, dated October 28, 2011, which discusses options for eliminating the current dam on the Jock River and restoring vegetation along the river banks at and above the location of the dam. We wish to register our support for the proposal to remove the Heart's Desire dam and restore the natural vegetation along the river banks.

The Jock River is a large and important tributary of the Rideau River and the dam represents an impediment to the movement of fish along it. The installation of the dam and the creation of the headpond above the dam have altered the river's natural flow pattern. In addition, they may be responsible for erosion, sedimentation and a change in the temperature profile in the headpond, as well as local scouring downstream of the dam.

To rectify these problems, we support decommissioning of the dam, and recommend that:

- (1) The sill at the base of the dam is removed*, and the river bed restored as closely as possible to its original profile.
- (2) Access to the dam for removal purposes is carried out with as little disturbance to the surrounding forested area as possible.
- (3) Vegetation restoration is undertaken using native species.
- (4) Access for residents along the river bank is maintained by installing steps.
- (5) The area is monitored on a regular basis after the work is completed to ensure that the bank is stabilized and vegetation restoration is successful.
- (6) Corrective measures are taken, if monitoring indicates problems with either bank stabilization or vegetation restoration.

*We support complete removal of the sill or its reduction to below the original level of the river bed, so that the river bed can be restored to its original profile. In the latter case, it is unclear that a “notch” would be necessary. Simply removing the top of the sill with jackhammers and cutting a narrow notch would presumably result in a narrow “chute” at times of low water level. A wide notch would be necessary to minimize this problem and yield a more natural flow.

Please keep us informed of further developments with respect to the planning for removal of the Heart’s Desire dam.

Sincerely,

John McDonnell
Executive Director
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