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## Mark Strahl

Member of Parliament  
Chilliwack—Hope

August 9 2016

Director Sara Anghel  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
8-14 McEwan Drive West  
Bolton ON L7E 1H1

Dear Director Anghel,

As you know, on November 25, 2013, amendments to the *Fisheries Act* came into effect. Those changes altered the focus of the *Act* towards protecting the productivity of recreational, commercial and Aboriginal fisheries.

Prior to the changes, there was no distinction drawn between the vital waterways, lakes and rivers that support Canada's fisheries and small bodies of water that may not even be home to fish. At that point, drainage ditches, irrigation channels and other non-descript bodies of water, were subject to the same rules and guidelines as rivers, lakes, and oceans that support fish and local fisheries.

This more focused regulatory and policy framework has been beneficial for all stakeholders, including industry, landowners, anglers, municipal and provincial governments, farmers and conservation groups. For industry groups, these changes provided greater clarity on the types of activities that will be reviewed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

As Conservative Members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans, we write today to alert you to an upcoming process where I believe your organization should have their voice heard. We have recently been made aware that the Liberal Government is seeking to have the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans do a review of the scope of application of the *Fisheries Act*, and complete a report by early 2017. This is in response to the Prime Minister's mandate letter to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, requesting the Minister to "Work with the Minister of Transport to review the previous government's changes to the *Fisheries* and *Navigable Waters Protection Acts*, restore lost protections, and incorporate modern safeguards."

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Our previous Conservative Government was committed to adopting a more sensible and practical approach to protecting Canada's fisheries and making sure they are productive and sustainable for future generations. From our perspective, there is no evidence that any of the changes made in 2013 have been in any way detrimental to Canada's fisheries habitats or aquatic ecosystems. In our view, prior to these changes, the legislation was so broad in scope that it was hindering opportunities for rural development and slowed the positive process of economic diversification.

We would urge you to make your affiliated organizations aware of this upcoming process, and consult with them regarding their views on this important matter. Further, we would encourage you to also consider the effects of the changes to the Navigable Waters Act, as it is expected that the Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities will undertake a similar review of that legislation this fall.

We anticipate that our Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans will begin to undertake meetings as part of this review in late September through October. In the meantime, should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact any of our offices.

Sincerely,



Mark Strahl, MP  
Chilliwack — Hope  
Member of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans  
Critic for Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard



Robert Sopuck, MP  
Dauphin-Swan River-Neepawa  
Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans  
Critic for Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Parks Canada



Mel Arnold, MP  
North Okanagan — Shuswap  
Member of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans  
Deputy Critic for Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard