



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." -- Margaret Mead.

I have never been more encouraged to be an environmental advocate than I am today. When I started Lake Ontario Waterkeeper eight years ago this December, I made a public vow to champion clean water: for me, my family, my neighbours, and my entire community. I have never stood alone in this effort. From the start, you and the others who made donations, wrote letters of appreciation, volunteered in our office, and attended our events made our good work possible.

Today, I am so honoured to tell you about two recent success stories:

- One of the world's biggest cement companies cancelled its plans to burn toxic materials in its cement kiln near Kingston, Ontario after our three-year legal campaign
- Mercury being deposited into Canadian waterways from American coal-fired power plants will be significantly reduced, in part because of the groundbreaking case Lake Ontario Waterkeeper helped to bring against one of Michigan's energy companies.

Because of this work, you now have access to **cutting edge air and water quality science**. You now have **a strengthened right to contribute** to the decisions that affect your environment. You are more protected from polluters operating on the U.S. side of the border. This kind of work had never been done before.

There is still so much work to do, of course. One of the ironies of our age is that, even though "the environment" is on everybody's minds, we are actually seeing a decline in support for environmental protection. Government programs are overstretched or cut altogether. Industry has mounted an unprecedented lobbying campaign in an effort to skirt environmental rules. Meanwhile, our environmental laws - our last safeguards - are being reduced or eliminated.

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Every day new threats to our water are introduced. Without fair, science-based decision making, these threats stand in the way of a swimmable, drinkable, fishable future:

- nuclear power plants that kill billions of fish and jeopardize the security of our drinking water
- quarries that suck up our groundwater, flood our creeks, and displace endangered species
- sewage system expansions that will lead to more beach closures and chemicals in our tap water

Fighting for fair, science-based choices is Lake Ontario Waterkeeper's job for the coming year. Through our **research and education** projects, we are introducing the world's best scientific knowledge to the decision-makers, policy-shapers, and teachers who hold the future of our water in their hands. Through our **investigations and field work**, we are identifying the places that are responsible for toxic fish, disappearing fish habitat, contaminated drinking water, and polluted beaches. Through our fledgling **membership projects**, we are bringing together members, supporters, friends, and acquaintances to build the support network we all need to achieve our goal: a swimmable, drinkable, fishable Lake Ontario.

With your support, Lake Ontario - indeed, every body of water in our country - can have a very bright future. It isn't just about securing the financial resources we need to fund our work. It is about sustaining a strong, vibrant community. Without your continued support, our job is almost impossible. We do not have the power or the resources to stem the tide of pollution alone.

Here's how you can help: Please donate. We keep our overhead and fundraising expenses low so your contributions pay for our charitable projects like research and investigations. **Please volunteer.** There are dozens of simple things that you can do to help us out. **Please spread the word.** Help us expand our network of friends and supporters. Every bit counts. You have helped us prove over the last few years that success is possible.

Sincerely,

Mark Mattson
Waterkeeper & President

P.S. Please read the enclosed write-up for more information about our complimentary services, as well as information about how to make a tax-deductible contribution to clean water. Your continued enthusiasm means so much.

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