

GEORGIAN BAY FOREVER



Protecting your water.

The Honourable Chris Ballard,
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
Ferguson Block 11th Flr,
77 Wellesley St W,
Toronto, ON M7A 2T5

September 14, 2017

Minister:

We are writing to provide you with our thoughts on the issue of public availability of information related to water quality in Ontario. Georgian Bay Forever (GBF) is an organization committed to conducting, supporting and funding science and scientific studies related to the waters of Georgian Bay and providing public education on this important region.

As you are aware, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change collects information from municipalities on sewage bypasses and related discharges. However, this information is not all made available to the public. The result of this is that Ontarians are left without a reliable way to be informed when untreated or partially treated sewage is released or planned to be released into local waterways in which they sail, canoe, kayak, boat and swim; and from which they often draw their drinking water.

This is of particular interest to GBF as we conduct water sampling programs to assist the Province and the Municipalities of Georgian Bay in the management of water resources. GBF is of the view that being made aware of discharges into a water body is important in order to allow organizations and individuals to properly maintain and understand the results of water sampling programs and to be aware of occurrences that could have effects on water bodies and sampling programs taking place on them.

Having considered the current state of reporting and availability of information related to water quality we would like to advise you that GBF is generally supportive of the intentions and objectives of Bill 141, "An Act to amend the Ontario Water Resources Act with respect to the public reporting of sewage bypassing". We encourage the Government to make efforts to work to achieve these intentions and objectives without delay.

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We appreciate your taking the time to consider these comments and would be pleased to discuss any questions you might have with your staff or officials.

Respectfully,

Chair
Georgian Bay Forever

Executive Director
Georgian Bay Forever