

NEWS RELEASE

(For Immediate Release)

PETITCODIAC RIVERKEEPER MOVES FORWARD WITH ITS LEGAL ACTION

Moncton, August 23, 2007 — Petitcodiac Riverkeeper announced today that it is going ahead with the legal action it filed in Federal Court at the beginning of July. On August 7th, the province indicated its intention to proceed with the restoration of the Petitcodiac River, with the condition of negotiating a funding partnership with the federal government. At the time, the organization had decided to take a few weeks to analyze the consequences of this announcement in regards to its legal action.

The purpose of Riverkeeper's legal action is twofold. First it seeks a declaration from the Federal Court confirming that the federal and provincial governments are currently in violation of the Fisheries Act. Second it is asking the Court to force the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to undertake the necessary measures to correct the situation and restore fish passage.

“The announcement made by the provincial government demonstrating its commitment to the restoration was a very important step,” stated Michel Desjardins, Riverkeeper Chairman. “But it was only a partial victory. The federal government now has to commit itself and get involved,” he added.

Even though Fisheries Minister Loyola Hearn affirmed during his visit to Moncton last July that he was ready “to do what needs to be done”, he remains nonetheless vague and uncommitted when it comes to setting timelines. Furthermore, Hearn's colleague Greg Thompson, the sole cabinet minister representing the Province of New-Brunswick, made it clear during recent interviews that his government is far from reaching an agreement with the province.

According to Michel Desjardins, the federal government must first and foremost, recognize that the causeway structure is not in compliance with Canadian law. “We are going through with our legal action because the federal government does not seem inclined at the moment to exercise its very basic responsibility, which is to recognize that the causeway violates the Fisheries Act,” stated Desjardins.

According to Petitcodiac Riverkeeper, having the federal government recognize its legal responsibility will help to finally resolve the issue. “A victory in Federal Court will give more weight to the argument that the federal government has a moral obligation to contribute financially to the restoration of our river,” concluded Michel Desjardins.

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