

## Ontario committed to the Great Lakes

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The Hamilton Spectator

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Re: 'Minister mum on Randle Reef' (July 12)

I am writing to correct any misconceptions about the McGuinty government's commitment to cleaning up Randle Reef.

The government recognizes how important Hamilton Harbour is to the growth and prosperity of Hamilton. After years of neglect, we are committed to restoring the health of the Great Lakes. Not only are we making progress with Randle Reef, we are seeing improvements across the entire Great Lakes basin.

Restoring and protecting the Great Lakes is a shared responsibility. The McGuinty government is committed to partnerships with the federal government, First Nations, municipalities and industries. In Hamilton Harbour, the remediation of Randle Reef is progressing thanks to the support and co-operation of the Bay Area Restoration Council and local public advisory groups.

Ontario has invested \$50 million in Great Lakes projects over the past five years and over \$4 million to prepare for the remediation of Randle Reef.

This year's provincial budget commits more than \$32 million over three years to sustain the Great Lakes, as part of a proposal to renew the Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA).

Since we cannot fully protect the Great Lakes without co-operation with our neighbours, Ontario is actively contributing to the review of the Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement which is currently underway. We want to ensure that this agreement is renewed so we can address the pressing issues of our time: climate change and invading aquatic species.

The McGuinty government is committed to restoring our Great Lakes and will continue to provide the Great Lakes ecosystem with the protection and management it needs and deserves.