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83 SKYLINE DRIVE
DUNDAS, ONTARIO
L9H 3S3

SIR OR MADAME

THE PROBLEM OF THE DECLINING SPORT FISH POPULATION IN GEORGIAN BAY (DISTRICT OF PARRY SOUND, CARLING TOWNSHIP) IS NO DOUBT A CONCERN TO MANY. BEING GENERALLY UNAWARE OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION COLLECTED BY, AND AVAILABLE TO THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES, MY OPINIONS ARE BASED ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

THE FISHING IN GEORGIAN BAY HAS WITHOUT ANY DOUBT DECLINED FROM MY MY FISHING MEMORIES AS A YOUNGSTER (EARLY 1950'S) TO THE RECENT FISHING WITH MY OWN YOUNGSTERS. HAVING SPENT AS MUCH OF EVERY FISHING SEASON AS POSSIBLE ON GEORGIAN BAY, THE FISHING HAS STEADILY GONE DOWNHILL ... FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS.

THE LAKETROUT WHICH AT ONE TIME WERE ABUNDANT IN THE "BIG SOUND" I HAVE BEEN TOLD, WERE THE VICTIMS OF THE LAMPREY. THE DECLINING PICKEREL, PIKE AND SMALL MOUTH POPULATIONS, I HAVE ALSO BEEN TOLD, IS PRIMARILY DUE TO COMMERCIAL FISHING. I TEND TO BELIEVE BOTH EXPLANATIONS.

Q.1 DO MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES STATISTICS COINCIDE WITH MY BELIEF THAT COMMERCIAL FISHING IS AFFECTING THE SPORT FISHING, AND WHAT ACTION IS PLANNED?

THE SPORT FISH POPULATION ALSO SEEMS TO BE DECREASING IN AVERAGE SIZE, WHICH IS INCREASINGLY APPARENT WHEN FISHING SMALLMOUTH. IT IS NOW NECESSARY TO MAKE YOUR LIMIT WITH SMALLER FISH, WHICH IN THE PAST WERE RELEASED DUE TO THEIR SIZE. THE FACT THAT ANGLERS ARE NOW KEEPING SMALLER FISH MIGHT COMPOUND THE POPULATION PROBLEM DUE TO FISH BEING KEPT BEFORE REACHING SPAWNING SIZE.

Q.2 WOULD A SIZE LIMIT HELP THE SPORT FISH POPULATION PROBLEM, OR DO MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES STATISTICS INDICATE THE SURVIVAL RATE OF RELEASED FISH IS TOO LOW TO JUSTIFY A SIZE LIMIT?

ANOTHER PERSONAL OBSERVATION WHICH MAY, OR MAY NOT BE OF ANY SIGNIFICANCE IS THE APPARENT INCREASE IN THE NUMBERS OF CARP IN GEORGIAN BAY. IN THE PAST IT WAS CONSIDERED UNUSUAL TO SEE CARP SPAWNING IN THE SPRING, NOW, IN AT LEAST ONE SHALLOW BAY THE NUMBERS OF CARP HAVE INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY EACH YEAR.

Q.3 IS THE APPARENT INCREASE IN THE CARP, A SYMPTOM OF DEPLETED PREDATOR (PICKEREL - PIKE) SPECIES, OR IS IT SOMEHOW A CAUSE?

IT IS APPRECIATED THAT THE PROBLEMS FACING GEORGIAN BAY FISH POPULATIONS ARE EXTREMELY COMPLEX, AND THAT SPECIFIC INTEREST GROUPS ARE GOING TO COME INTO CONFRONTATION (IE. TOURISM VS. COMMERCIAL FISHING VS. INDIVIDUAL ANGLERS) BUT ... IF COMMERCIAL FISHING IS A MAJOR CAUSE OF THE DECLINE OF SPORT FISHING, THEN THE PRICE BEING PAID TO ALLOW CONTINUED COMMERCIAL FISHING IS TOO HIGH, AND UNFORTUNATELY IS BEING PAID BY THE WRONG PEOPLE. INFORMATION OF A GENERAL NATURE REGARDING SPORT FISHING WOULD BE APPRECIATED, BUT A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO MY Q.1 AND Q.2 IN PARTICULAR WOULD BE MORE SATISFACTORY

THANKING YOU, IN ADVANCE

D. Clement
D. CLEMENT



Ministry of Minister
Natural
Resources

Whitney Block
Queen's Park
Toronto Ontario
416/965-1301

December 14, 1982

Mr. D. Clement
83 Skyline Drive
Dundas, Ontario
L9H 3S3

Dear Mr. Clement:

Thank you for your letter regarding the fishery of eastern Georgian Bay.

Since 1979, my Ministry has directed a great deal of effort toward solving some of the major problems on Georgian Bay. As you are already probably aware, my Ministry has made a commitment to restore the once famous trout fishery in the Big Sound, off the Town of Parry Sound.

The initial large plantings of backcross splake made in the fall of 1981 and the spring of 1982 are doing well and a major fishery is expected in the Big Sound by 1984.

An allocation system for the commercial harvest of yellow pickerel was initiated in 1979 and the allocation of yellow pickerel outside the Bayfield and Naiscoot area was reduced further in 1982. In addition, a closed season for northern pike and yellow pickerel during the spawning period was established in the spring of 1982.

Presently, I am reviewing the whole question of commercial fishing on all the Great Lakes, particularly in terms of how it can be more effectively managed.

Your letter suggests that you are very interested in the fisheries program in the Parry Sound District. In this regard, I ask you to contact my District Manager, Mr. W. J. Lovering, at Parry Sound if you wish more details about the fisheries.

I appreciate your concerns about our natural resources and am sure, in time, the fishery along the eastern Georgian Bay will be restored.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alan W. Pope".

Alan W. Pope