



NORTHERN ONTARIO
AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION

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Letters to the Editor
One Yonge Street
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Re: Cottagers face off against fish farmers, Oct. 10

In response to the article, "Cottagers face off against fish farmers," I'd like to provide the following facts:

- The vast majority of cottagers that regularly frequent our cage culture operations have no opposition to fish farming and in fact appreciate our positive impact on the wild fisheries for recreational family fishing.
- Cottage owners have a larger impact on the lake than trout farmers. The combined footprint of aquaculture in Lake Huron represents much less than 0.005% of total lake area. Picture a pencil point on a sheet of paper – that's how small aquaculture is relative to Lake Huron. Similarly, the annual phosphorus loading from aquaculture operations in Lake Huron represents less than 1% of the total from all sources.
- Discussing West Coast salmon farming related issues in an article on freshwater aquaculture serves no one. The reality is that beyond a very superficial level, the issues and the accompanying debates are very location specific. Unfortunately, opposition to freshwater aquaculture is often inflamed by a small group of individuals using outdated science and misinformation.
- The freshwater cage aquaculture industry continues to operate within Ministry standards and regulations. For the past 20 years or more, no current operator has been found to be in contravention of environmental standards or non-compliance in licencing issues.
- Aquaculture and related activities contributes more than \$50 million dollars annually to the Ontario economy and supports over 200 jobs – all in areas that desperately need these jobs.

Singling out fish farmers is like singling out one car in the City of Toronto and focusing on that one car as the source of all air quality concerns in the city. A much more productive exercise would be having all car owners make small but cumulatively significant improvements to make their vehicles environmentally friendly. The Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association will continue to move forward with all regulators and stakeholders in an environmentally sustainable and environmentally accountable manner.

Sincerely,

Karen Tracey

Karen Tracey
Executive Director
Northern Ontario Aquaculture Association