

November 1, 2017

Honourable Amarjeet Sohi
Minister Infrastructure & Communities
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
amarjeet.sohi@canada.ca

Honourable Lloyd Hines
Minister Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal
Chedabucto Center
Guysborough, Nova Scotia
B0H 1N0
lphines@ns.sympatico.ca

Honourable Bill Fraser
Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure
Kings Place; P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB
E3B 5H1
bill.fraser@gnb.ca

Re: High Risk to National Infrastructure across Chignecto Isthmus (Tantramar Marsh)

We write to all three senior governments today to express our shared concerns over the increasing risk climate changes poses to the highway, railway, and electrical infrastructure that crosses the Chignecto isthmus shared by New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. As we live here we can attest to the documents showing the quickly increasing risk of flooding from the Bay of Fundy. This infrastructure across the head of the Bay is a key part of an integrated trade and commercial system of ports, marine terminals, airports, border crossings, and road and rail connections. The extent of damage of a major flood event on the isthmus will ripple across Canada, hugely effect our two provinces, and will be devastating to local governments at both ends of the Tantramar marsh.

Protection of the infrastructure investments on the Tantramar marsh rely on a series of agricultural dykes first built in the 1700s. The aging dykes combined with documented rising water levels and increased frequencies and intensity of weather events -- has led to new floodplain mapping. These clearly show that a flood that will breach the national Rail and Road networks is no longer a theoretical question - it is a matter of how soon it will occur.

A 2016 study of this topic by Natural Resources Canada estimates that a flood that interrupts road and rail activity here will cause over \$50 million/day in lost commerce. That report also examined adaptation options and found that the most cost-effective measure was to shorten and re-engineer dykes with a specific intent to protect priority infrastructure.

Since the study was released we have been working to raise understanding of the scope of the threat. While our local jurisdictions will be impacted, a solution requires far more than we can offer. Action requires national and interprovincial commitment and involvement of multiple public agencies as well as effected private ventures.

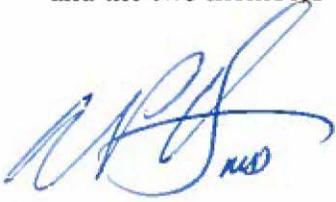
After a variety of independent actions by our respective local governments, we found we shared the same concerns and agreed the issue was too large for us to address. We jointly met with the local Members of Parliament for Cumberland and Beausejour ridings to explain the increasing urgency and the national scope of this matter. We noted that numerous complicating features seemed to be working against a cooperative and urgent response. We were advised that a joint letter should take those same messages to the three Ministers responsible for federal and provincial infrastructure as quickly as possible—hence this letter to each of you today.

We believe that the documented facts of the risks and impacts of this situation will be self-apparent and that discussion should be focused on protection and adaptation actions. However, we first want to ensure that is the case before you or your departments consider action. So we would suggest the following set of priority actions:

1. You or your senior representatives join us here within the next four or five weeks for a full day session on the data involved with the flooding threat to local, interprovincial, and national assets and interests.
2. That from those results we strike a working group that will:
 - Outline the prime funding sources, applications and documents necessary to act on the full response to the danger based on the recommendation in the Natural Resources Canada report and;
 - Produce an initial draft of terms of reference for a preliminary study to technically examine the nature of the work required to undertake a full response
 - Combine the results above into a full submission for funding and action necessary to protect the infrastructure of National importance across the Tantramars marsh.

We understand that much of this work can be undertaken during winter and highly recommend we seek to meet as soon as possible so that action can begin. Please know that each of the undersigned will be contacting your offices in the next few days to ensure the meeting can be as timely and productive as possible.

Thank you for your understanding of the urgency with which we have written to you today. As you will note we have copied the two Premiers as well as the two federal Members of Parliament and the two members of our respective provincial legislatures.



David Kogon
Mayor, Town of Amherst



Al Gillis
Warden, Cumberland County



John Higham
Mayor, Town of Sackville

Cc Honourable Bill Casey - MP Cumberland
Honourable Dominic LeBlanc - MP Beausejour
Premier Stephen McNeil - Nova Scotia
Premier Brian Gallant - New Brunswick
Bernard LeBlanc - NB MLA
Elizabeth Smith-McCrossin -- NS MLA

Bill.Casey@parl.gc.ca
dominic.leblanc@parl.gc.ca
PREMIER@novascotia.ca
premier@gnb.ca
Bernard.LeBlanc@gnb.ca
mla@esmithmccrossinmla.com