



News Release  
For Immediate Release

## GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TAKES ACTION TO RESTORE THE HEALTH OF THE DETROIT RIVER AND PROTECT THREATENED FISH

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**FIGHTING ISLAND, LA SALLE, Ontario, April 19, 2008** – Jeff Watson, Member of Parliament for Essex, today announced \$15,000 of funding for the Fighting Island Sturgeon Restoration Project in the Detroit River. This announcement comes on the heels of \$600,000 announced by Mr. Watson to help clean-up contaminated sediment in the Great Lakes Area of Concern.

“Canadians want to see real action to protect our Great Lakes and this Government is moving quickly to restore the health of our waterways as we promised we would,” said Mr. Watson. “Today’s announcement builds upon the significant financial commitment we have already made to help clean up the Detroit River.”

The Fighting Island Sturgeon Restoration Project is a three-year restoration project that will construct a sturgeon spawning reef between Fighting Island and the Canadian mainland, off the northeast corner of the island. The area is a known historical spawning area for sturgeon and they are frequently seen congregating there.

“Our Government is committed to clean water and delivering results for Canadians,” said Canada’s Environment Minister John Baird. “Thanks to the hard work of your local MP Jeff Watson, our Government is taking real action to restore the health of the Detroit River and the Great Lakes. This investment, as part of our comprehensive Action Plan for Clean Water, will make a real difference for Windsor and Essex County.”

The lake sturgeon, a remnant of the dinosaur age, is considered a threatened species by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. The Lake Huron-Lake Erie corridor was, at one time, one of the most productive waters for lake sturgeon in North America. However, the lake sturgeon population today is estimated to be approximately one per cent of its former abundance.

This investment to help restore the health of the Detroit River is part of the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Clean Water. The Action Plan includes projects like \$48 million to clean up eight hot spots across the Canadian side of the Great Lakes, as well as a commitment to bring in tough new regulations against the dumping of raw sewage and improving raw sewage treatment in municipalities and first nation communities across Canada. These measures will help filter out substances like phosphates, which can lead to excessive blue-green algae production.