

August 7, 2007
Petitcodiac Riverkeeper

Petitcodiac: We have reached the point of no return

Moncton, August 7, 2007 — According to Petitcodiac Riverkeeper, today's announcement by the provincial government of its intention to go ahead with the dismantlement of the Petitcodiac Causeway and replacing it with a 280-metre bridge, is an important victory for the river.

"We have reached an important landmark today," pointed out Riverkeeper President, Michel Desjardins. "The option the province has chosen for the restoration of the Petitcodiac River is the right one. It promises to maximize the benefits related to our river's restoration, ecologically as well as economically, culturally and socially."

According to Petitcodiac Riverkeeper, there is no turning back. "We have now reached the point of no return. The provincial government has given notice of its intention to proceed; all that's left to do is negotiate the financial structure and time tables with the federal government," emphasized Michel Desjardins.

In this regard, the organization's president is optimistic that both levels of government will come to an agreement soon. "The Federal Fisheries Minister was here a few weeks ago and said he wanted to know the province's intentions before committing himself.

The important thing is that he's recognized his government's responsibility in this matter," added Desjardins. The fact that Premier Graham and Prime Minister Harper get along is also a positive sign according to the organization.

Nevertheless, Petitcodiac Riverkeeper urges the governments to come to a speedy agreement. "If it's only a question of time, better to not waste any. Every day we wait is another day in violation of the Fisheries Act, and everyday we waste the more sediment builds up, adding to the ecological disaster," exclaimed Desjardins.

The organization says it wants some time to analyze today's announcement and decide the implications for the legal action started about a month ago. "We will seek the advice of our legal team over the next few days. We will assess whether we can hope to achieve more in court than what was announced today," said the president.

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