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Ms. Linda Mosher
Chair and Councillor
Halifax Regional Municipality
P.O. Box 1749
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3A5

Dear Ms. Mosher:

Thank you for your correspondence of October 3, 2005, addressed to the Honourable Geoff Regan, in which you express your concerns regarding the Northwest Arm of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Minister. I regret the delay in responding.

As you are aware, there are a number of regulatory agencies involved in the management of coastal development in the Northwest Arm. Under the leadership of Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM), these agencies participate in a multi-agency committee on infilling and coastal development in the Northwest Arm. The committee has met a number of times, and has recognized that none of the agencies can actually prohibit infills under existing legislation; however, through a coordinated approach all agencies can play a role in promoting decisions consistent with HRM objectives.

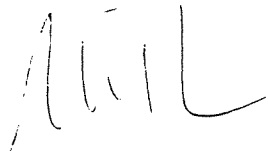
With respect to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) authorization of a harmful alteration, disruption or destruction (HADD) of fish habitat pursuant to the *Fisheries Act* as it relates to infilling, the scope of departmental consideration is restricted to the protection of fish and fish habitat. While this does not facilitate decision-making in relation to some of the concerns expressed by members of the community, such as protecting view planes and cultural values, it does provide DFO with a mandate to ensure that aquatic ecosystems are healthy and productive.

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Please note that in the past five years, DFO has issued only one authorization for a HADD related to infilling in the Northwest Arm, and there are currently no applications under consideration. Any development proposals in and around water will be carefully considered pursuant to DFO's regulatory responsibilities and the department will continue to coordinate with HRM.

Thank you for the opportunity to outline DFO's support for the efforts of HRM through the multi-agency committee and sustainable management of fish habitat.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'RWex', written in a cursive style.

Richard Wex
Director General
Habitat Management