Name of legislator goes here

Dear Hon. Sir / Madam:

RE: Miramichi Striped Bass / Salmon Conflict

My name is and I am very concerned about the Department of Fisheries and Oceans DFO’s failure to properly manage the Atlantic salmon in the Miramichi River, New Brunswick.

Until very recently the Miramichi was home to the largest population of Atlantic salmon in Canada. The river is still quite pristine and has an unparalleled volume of spawning habitat. As recently as 2011 the Miramichi population of wild Atlantic salmon was approaching 100,000 adult fish and the river had a robust recreational and indigenous fishery. The Miramichi historically has held the greatest concentration of outfitters in the Province. A guide is required for all non-residents of the Province, and many local guides are 5th generation on the river. The Miramichi supports approximately 90% of all Atlantic salmon fishing trips made in the Province.

The Miramichi is also home to a fish called the striped bass. DFO feared that the numbers of striped bass had gotten too low and closed the river to all fishing for them. Over 20 years the bass population leapt up from a few thousand to nearly a million. Scientific evidence has been coming in for years that bass, which mass to spawn at the same time the salmon smolts migrate out to the ocean, are wiping out the salmon smolts. Smolt survival from the river to the ocean has dropped from approximately 70% to less than 5% in the Northwest Branch and less than 20% in the Southwest Branch. The numbers of salmon getting by the bass are completely inadequate to continue the population. Scientists estimate that what was recently one of the greatest salmon runs on earth will soon become extinct. In 2019 the FOPO House Standing Committee on Fisheries told DFO to bring the salmon and bass populations into balance, but DFO has ignored that request, instead hiding behind a seriously flawed report that concluded bass were having no population-level effect on Miramichi salmon.

A group of private citizens called Save Miramichi Salmon Inc. SMS has requested that DFO meet with them, First Nations and other stakeholders to urgently discuss a crises response plan that will address this situation in the immediate term and eliminate the imbalance in the medium and long term. The suggested plan is entirely feasible and should be undertaken promptly. A summary of that plan is available on the website at Save Miramichi Salmon.Com.

SMS is preparing to take legal action against DFO in federal court if positive action isn’t forthcoming and have retained and instructed legal counsel accordingly. So far DFO has ignored SMS’s request to meet and a deadline of 12/22/24 is approaching.

I ask that you use the power of your office to advise the DFO Minister that the Miramichi salmon are a priceless resource, and that you insist that they meet with SMS and work out a plan to fix the current salmon/striped bass imbalance.

This crises is of vital importance to me personally, and I request follow up action including a response as soon as possible as to what you have done about my request.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)