Environmental Law Reform

# **Letters to the Editors- Guidelines and Template March 2018**

Dear Nature Canada Members:

Letters to Editors are an excellent way to encourage and promote discussion of nature topics you are passionate about. A Letter to the Editor can help create awareness about an important issue and help to influence public opinion.

Publishing a Letter to the Editor is not a simple process. Most editors of publications receive up to 300- 500 letter submissions daily.

You can significantly improve your chances of having your letter published by following these guidelines.

**Letters to the Editor Guidelines**

* A timely letter will be more likely to be chosen for publication. It is best to respond within seven days to a particular article or news event that was published by the newspaper.
* Try to make the letter concrete if you are commenting on a national issue, highlight the national significance and try to link it to a recent event or article that discusses the issue.
* If you are responding to a community event or issue, your local (community) newspaper is the best publication to submit your letter to.
* Be concise, try to keep letters to fewer than 150 words. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.
* Send letters by e-mail and include the contents of the letter in the body of the e-mail message as plain text only. Do not use Microsoft Word format or rich text format (RTF).
* Do not send letters as an attachment.
* Ensure you include your name, address and daytime phone number.

***Environmental Law Reform*Letters to the Editor - Template**

Name of Media Outlet or Publication

Attention: Editor

Address

City, Postal Code

Dear Editor:

RE: *[State your reason for writing your letter right at the beginning. If you are responding to articles or editorials by the media, use the first sentence to reference the title or topic of the article (such as Declining Monarch Butterflies), name of the author or source (i.e, Globe and Mail), and the date the article was published.]*

* In your [DATE] article [ARTICLE TITLE], columnist [NAME OF REPORTER/COLUMNIST] states [MAIN POINT OF ARTICLE].
* The federal government introduced the proposed Impact Assessment Act to Parliament in February 2018; and overall, the proposed bill presents a strong effort toward improving environmental assessments. The bill improves greatly on the government’s 2012 law, but amendments are needed if the federal government is to fulfill its international obligations, regain public trust and position Canada for a sustainable future.

*[If you responding to a current issue, state that you are responding to the issue and where the issue is being addressed. State your points here. Include facts, references, or research here to establish credibility. Keep length in mind.]*

* The proposed Impact Assessment Act represents an important law reform for Canadians. The new legislation contains provisions to overhaul the current environmental assessment framework, and replace the National Energy Board (NEB) with the Canadian Energy Regulator.
* This proposed bill improves on the current law by emphasizing sustainability, a single-agency approach to assessing resource projects, and eliminating rules restricting public participation in hearings.
* Despite that, amendments are needed for this bill to support Canada’s international commitments to reverse biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
* These amendments present the best opportunity in a generation for the federal government to fulfill its international commitments, regain the trust of the Canadian public, and to position Canada for a sustainable future.

[*Include a CALL TO ACTION: asking readers to follow up with some activity, such as joining in calling on policymakers to address the issue.]*

* We need to ensure the federal government works with the provinces, Indigenous Peoples, and stakeholders to:
  + Reverse the regressive law enacted made by a previous government, restore lost protections, and incorporate modern safeguards to our environmental laws.
  + Establish comprehensive, timely, and fair processes to assess the sustainability of proposed development projects and government policies, including their cumulative and climate change effects, and allow the public opportunities to meaningfully participate in these processes.
  + Ensure the government engages Indigenous Peoples in project assessments on a nation-to-nation basis.
  + Reinstate protection of fish habitat into the Fisheries Act to incorporate more modern safeguards.
  + Reinstate protection of navigable waters into the Navigation Protection Act and include more modern safeguards.

[*End with a strong, positive STATEMENT in support of your case*]

* For 2020, let’s call on our federal government to strengthen environmental law such as the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, Fisheries Act and Canadian Environmental Protection Act.
* Please go to [Nature Canada’s website](http://naturecanada.ca/) to sign our petition on Environmental Law reform to let our federal government know that you demand legal action to protect Canada’s land, waters and species.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Name of writer