



ALBERTA
ENVIRONMENT AND PARKS

*Office of the Minister
Government House Leader
MLA, Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre*

FEB 23 2020

Tom Thackeray

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Dear Tom Thackeray:

Thank you for your email regarding the cormorant population on Moose Lake. I welcome the opportunity to provide the following information.

As an avid outdoorsman, I am passionate about fishing and lake recreation opportunities and dedicated to ensuring these opportunities continue to be available on our provincial lakes across Alberta. Recent 2020 fish survey information collected from Moose Lake for walleye and northern pike indicate that the sustainability of these fish populations is at risk.

Moose Lake is a very important water body in the region, and popular with recreational anglers, and Environment and Parks is committed to monitoring and providing self-sustaining fish harvest opportunities at Moose Lake. For more information on Moose Lake's fall index netting data and Alberta's fish sustainability index, please visit open.alberta.ca/publications and search for "Moose Lake FIN summary 2020."

I have heard from many Albertans regarding the large numbers of cormorants at Moose Lake and other area fisheries. As such, I have asked the department to review cormorant-control programs across North America, including recent work in Ontario. Staff evaluated options based on biological, logistical, safety and social considerations. The department plans to conduct surveys in spring 2021, to further assess cormorant populations in and around Moose Lake.

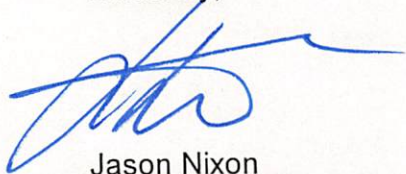
In addition, I am pleased to share the department will be undertaking cormorant-control activities in the Moose Lake area starting in spring 2021. Fisheries and wildlife management staff will provide more information and engage with stakeholders, including the Municipal District of Bonnyville, as we finalize the proposed plans. The program is designed to collect information to better understand the potential impacts of cormorants to fisheries in the area.

In an ongoing effort to improve our response, the department will continue to monitor and evaluate other techniques used in other North American jurisdictions. For more information on the program, please contact Mr. Travis Ripley, Executive Director of Fish and Wildlife Stewardship, at 780-427-7763 (dial 310-0000 for a toll-free connection), or at travis.ripley@gov.ab.ca.

Environment and Parks recently conducted a survey of Alberta anglers, which closed on February 8, 2021. During these engagement sessions fisheries management staff engaged on the topic of Moose Lake. The webinar on this topic can be accessed at www.alberta.ca under "public engagement." The feedback we received from your letter and the engagement sessions will help inform the department's decisions on fishing opportunities Albertans desire. I encourage you to subscribe to the mailing list for upcoming engagement sessions at www.alberta.ca.

Thank you again for writing.

Sincerely,



Jason Nixon
Minister

cc: Travis Ripley
Environment and Parks