Dear Mr. Neville:

Thank you for your letter concerning the BC Nature (Federation of BC Naturalists) 2011-06 Resolution on recreational activities in Wildlife Management Areas and conservation areas of the Fraser River delta.

As you know, Environment Canada has a responsibility to protect migratory birds under the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA 1994). Migratory bird sanctuaries are established pursuant to this act and its regulations in order to control and manage areas of importance for the protection of migratory birds.

In addition, national wildlife areas are managed pursuant to the Canada Wildlife Act to preserve habitats that are critical to migratory birds and other wildlife species, particularly those that are at risk. Under this act, public education is also a goal of national wildlife areas, although the first priority is the protection of wildlife.

The regulations for both national wildlife areas and migratory bird sanctuaries contain, among their other prohibitions, a prohibition against allowing domestic animals to run at large. The federal Wildlife Area Regulations also prohibit recreational activities and the operation of conveyances, unless notices are posted that state otherwise. In the case of the Alaksen National Wildlife Area, visitors are allowed to travel the dyke trails on foot during business hours for the purpose of wildlife viewing only. This activity is monitored by on-site staff, including wildlife enforcement officers.

Environment Canada does not condone harassment of migratory birds under any circumstances and works to prevent this from occurring. Although the Sea Island Conservation Area is a federal property, it is not a legislated protected area. Specific regulations are therefore not available to control the use of the...
site by dog walkers and other users. Signs encouraging appropriate behaviour are in place at various locations in the Area. Additional signage, as well as fencing, to encourage compliance with section 5 of the *Migratory Birds Regulations* under the MBCA 1994 is currently in the planning stages.

Should you wish to discuss this matter in greater detail, please contact Mr. Ken Brock of Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service, Pacific and Yukon Region, at ken.brock@ec.gc.ca or 604-940-4681.

I appreciate your bringing the concerns of your organization to my attention, and extend my best wishes.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

The Honourable Peter Kent, P.C., M.P.