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Shirley's Bay Radio Astronomy Consortium
c/o Mr Marcus Leech
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To Whom It May Concern:

As more and more of the formal Canadian budget for radio astronomy necessarily goes into major international projects, our ability to fund smaller, national instruments is declining. This is facing us with major problems. Firstly, not all radio astronomical projects require large, expensive instruments; they can be done on smaller ones. In addition, the smaller ones have the advantage of being available for long-term studies, which is certainly not the case for the front-line facilities. Secondly, full Canadian participation in international radio telescope projects requires a continuing source of technically-oriented radio astronomers and astronomically-oriented engineers. Education of such people requires access to radio telescopes and the ability to try out hardware, software and observational techniques on them. This accessibility is unlikely to be possible in the case of the international instruments.

For these reasons I feel strongly that this initiative to keep the Shirley's Bay antenna in action as a radio telescope will be good for the Canadian astronomical community. This dedicated team of people, determined to do what it takes to keep this instrument in action while not competing for mainstream astronomical funding is worthy of support. Opportunities to keep our smaller radio telescopes in action through private and small-group initiatives are too important to let go.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ken Tapping
Head, Solar Radio Monitoring Programme