



IJC / CMI OTTAWA ACTION: McAuley INFO: M. Clamen / PB MW SEP 11 2006 FILE / DOSSIER 3-4-9
--

**SUBMISSION
OF LAKE ONTARIO WATERKEEPER TO
INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION**

RE: REVIEW OF THE LAKE ONTARIO-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER
ORDERS OF APPROVAL

DOCUMENT: LOSL STUDY

SUBMISSION DATE: September 11, 2006

SUBMISSION TO:

The Secretary, Canadian Section
International Joint Commission
234 Laurier Avenue West, 22nd Floor
Ottawa ON K1P 6K6
BY FAX: (613) 993-5583
commission@ottawa.ijc.org

Lake Ontario Waterkeeper ("LOW") is a registered charity and environmental justice organization working to win back our rights to safely swim, drink, and fish in Lake Ontario. We submit this application pursuant to the comment period on the Lake Ontario Saint Lawrence River (LOSL) study released on May 31, 2006.

Background

Since 1952 Plan 1958-D has governed water level regulation in Lake Ontario. Over the half a century Plan 1958-D has regulated water levels, it is well known to have caused significant environmental impacts. Plan 1958-D reduced the range of "extreme" lake levels, narrowing transition zones within wetlands and reducing the diversity of plant types along the shore and populations of animal species within them. In Lake Ontario there has been a 50% reduction in two of the four types of wetlands identified in the LOSL study. A healthy ecosystem requires higher levels in spring and lower levels in autumn and Plan 1958-D has reduced this natural fluctuation.

Since the establishment of the LOSL study board in late 2000, the IJC has committed to finding a better water level regulation plan for Lake Ontario. The release of the LOSL study and data this year is a major step forward towards enhancing the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River ecosystem.


Lake Ontario Waterkeeper Endorses Plan B+

The LOSL study clearly concludes that Plan B+ is the best candidate plan for the overall environment. Plan B+ represents a favorable compromise between pre-dam ideal environmental conditions and human uses of the Lake and River waterways. LOW notes that this is the only candidate plan that is directed towards the goals of the study, that is improving the Lake and River ecosystem. By permitting a greater range of fluctuations, meadow marsh habitat in Lake Ontario will be significantly improved. Plan B+ does more than any other plan to address species at risk, with notable improvements to populations of least bittern, black tern, yellow rail, and king rail.

LOW is encouraged by the enthusiasm of other stakeholder groups and the environmental technical working group for this plan. We feel that this plan does not represent a "radical change" as it represents an effective and positive compromise between the pre-dam and post-dam environment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Submitted by:


Mark Mattson
Lake Ontario Waterkeeper
September 11, 2006