

Brockville, Ont.

September 13, 2006

Canadian Section Secretary
International Joint Commission
234 Laurier Avenue West, 22nd Floor
Ottawa, ON K1P 6K6

Dear Sir,

After reading the "Final Report by the International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Study Board", I feel I must comment on some of the recommendations. I have spent each summer for almost 70 years on an island in the Admiralty Group in the Thousand Islands and wish to see the area preserved in the most efficient and usable state as possible for my grandchildren and their children.

I have lived through the high water years of the 50's when docks needed a "catwalk" on top of them (including the federal docks in Gananoque), boats were floating in boathouses when people arrived in the spring, and many islands were flooded or shrunken in size. I have also seen low water years when the high federal dock at what is now the Gananoque Municipal Marina had ladders for people to get out of their boats. My parents have told me of years (late 30's) when they had to dig a trench to get the boats into the boathouse for winter storage.

The report states that many members of the boating community, especially those on the upper river support Plan B+. This does not include my family, my children's families or anyone I know in our area. It is not the view of the Thousand Islands Association, a 72 year old organization of Canadian and American islanders and boaters whose mandate is to preserve the quality of life in the 1000 Islands. To us Plan A+ makes much more sense.

Plan A+ is stated time and again throughout the report as being the best plan economically and for recreational boating, and good but not the best plan environmentally. Two out of three, and a good third at that!

One of the environmental indicators for the plans is the presence of muskrats. Prior to the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway, the island on which I grew up had a large swamp. We used to walk through it - on boards - and marvel at the tracks and trails left by muskrats. If we stood still for a while we could watch them coming and going. The swamp has long since dried up and most of the muskrats have gone. But not too far! They have simply moved farther out into the water and the newer shoreline, digging their nests into the banks and roots along the shore. They have proved to be very adept at burrowing into the floats on my dock and those of others.

We have seen a large increase in wildlife on the river; loons and herons especially. There appears to be no shortage of pike and Plan A+ is stated to be the best plan for their continuance.

Plan A+ will regulate or at least temper the extreme high and low water levels predicted by Plan B+. (Fig. 14 p. 44)

Plan A+ will have the best economic impact. (Table 5 P. 54)

Plan A+ will provide the best Percent Damage ... Relative to an Economic Baseline. (Table 7 P. 58)
Plan A+ will provide the 2nd best Environmental Performance ... (Table 8 P. 60)

While the report is based upon "majority" views, not consensus, it states that "a minority ... feel that Plan B+ represents too radical a change ... and could be a disproportionate loss." (Page vi)

The description of Plan A+ on page v really sums up the best plan as I see it.

Please keep in mind that Plan 1958-D after the development of the St. Lawrence Seaway was supposed to solve most of these problems, especially the high and low water levels.

I would appreciate you sharing these thoughts with the International Joint Commission.

Sincerely

Robert Orr
Lemon Island
Gananoque, Ont.