

REVIEW OF THE LAKE ONTARIO-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER ORDER
OF APPROVAL - PUBLIC HEARING IN ALEXANDRIA BAY, NEW YORK,
JUNE 25TH, 2008, 125 MIN.)

IRENE BROOKS (Chair, U.S. Section, International Joint Commission):
Good evening, good evening. Very, very happy to see you all here tonight. I'm
not Herb Gray. I'm Irene Brooks, and we are all very pleased that you were able
to come out. And we will begin...

ALLEN OLSON (Commissioner, U.S. Section, International Joint
Commission): (inaudible)...can't hear you, is that right?

IRENE BROOKS: Sorry?

UNIDENTIFIED: Can you turn the volume up please?

IRENE BROOKS: Of course. Nick is taking care of it now. Is that
better?

UNIDENTIFIED: We can hear you!

IRENE BROOKS: All right!

UNIDENTIFIED: Thank you.

IRENE BROOKS: You're welcome. It's very important. On behalf of
the International Joint Commission, I would like to welcome you to this public
hearing. This is the ninth of ten we are holding around the Lake Ontario-Saint
Lawrence River, and we express our appreciation for your attendance.

I'm Irene Brooks, Chair of the U.S. Section of the International Joint
Commission. With me tonight are my colleagues on the Commission, Canadian

Chair Herb Gray, commissioners Jack Blaney and Pierre Trépanier of Canada, and commissioners Allen Olson and Sam Speck of the United States.

We're here to receive your comments on proposed changes to how water is released through the Moses-Saunders dam on the Saint Lawrence River near Cornwall, Ontario and Massena, New York, which affects water levels and flows on Lake Ontario and on the Saint Lawrence River, as far down as Three Rivers, Quebec. These proposals were released by the International Joint Commission for public comment on March 28th, 2008.

After its release, the Commission mailed notices to over 5,000 people, held ten information sessions, published multiple announcements in local papers, sent e-mails, notices, and notified elected officials so that as many people as possible would be aware of the ten public hearings.

The International Joint Commission was created under the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 to help prevent and resolve disputes over the use of waters along the Canadian-U.S. boundary. In the 1950s, the governments asked the Commission to approve a major dam in the international section of the Saint Lawrence River.

They also asked the Commission to determine how flows through that dam could be managed to achieve certain objectives, and then approved the criteria offered by the Commission to meet those objectives. The objectives include reducing shoreline damage on Lake Ontario, in addition to enabling hydroelectric power generation and commercial navigation.

For nearly 50 years, water through the resulting dam has been released in accordance with requirements set by the Commission in an Order and regulation plan when the project was first built and then operated in 1960.

The Commission is now proposing changes to those requirements. It issued for public comment a proposed new Order of Approval and regulation plan for this dam – in essence, a proposed new legal framework and a proposed operational plan to implement it.

Our staff held ten information sessions here in the region during April and May to explain the Commission's proposal and answer technical questions about the content of that proposal, so we won't spend a lot of time tonight covering that ground again.

The purpose of tonight's hearing is for us to hear your comments about our proposal, and we'd like to leave as much time for that as possible. However, our lead staff – and I would ask them to stand up, Tom and Russ – they will make themselves available during any breaks and will stay at the conclusion of this hearing to answer any remaining informational questions.

Now I'd like to explain the procedures for tonight. We'll be following these procedures. And note that this is an international meeting in every respect. Whether you are from Canada or the United States, we encourage you to participate. We really welcome your comments to ensure that all relevant matters are taken into account.

If you wish to comment and did not do so when you registered, please see our staff at the registration table, right over there. You can register to speak at any time during tonight's hearing. Other than providing elected officials with the courtesy of speaking first if they wish, we will turn to those speaking to us for the first time on a first-come, first-served basis.

Anyone who has already made a presentation, either at this hearing or a previous hearing, may provide additional comments after others have had their first opportunity to speak. And I will announce those whose turn it is to speak.

When you speak, we ask you to please state your name and let us know whether you are speaking as an individual or on behalf of an organization. We ask you that you limit your oral comments to five minutes so everyone who wishes to speak has a chance to speak.

We have a system of three lights on the table that will indicate when your time is up, and you will be given a yellow light – I believe it's yellow – that will indicate a half a minute is left and then a red light when your time is done.

If you want to submit written statements or presentations in addition to your oral presentation, in either paper or electronic format, please provide them to the secretaries, who will later provide a copy to all commissioners and will make sure that they are included in the official record.

We are recording this hearing and all comments tonight will be part of a transcribed official record. Please use the microphone when you speak so that

your comments can be included in the transcript. Transcripts from all ten hearings will be posted to the Commission's website once available.

Commissioners may ask a few questions, particularly if we need clarification. Our questions and your responses will not be part of your allotted time.

We would appreciate one spokesperson for each organized group here. If you want to make your own individual comments, please do so. However, in the interest of time, if you find that a presenter before you has already made your point, please consider simply stating that you also support those points.

Following the hearing, we will accept written comments through July 11th. We invite you and your friends and neighbours who could not be here tonight to send any information or views that you might find helpful. Submissions may be made to either Commission secretary by email, fax, or regular mail. I assure you that everything that you send will be given full consideration and provided to all commissioners.

We will not make any decisions until after we have considered all public comments that we have received. We have been consulting with the U.S. and Canadian federal governments through the Department of State and Foreign Affairs, including in meetings in which state and provincial officials have been invited, and will be holding further meetings with them prior to seeking federal governments' concurrence on a final order and regulation plan.

And now, we have several elected officials who would like to speak, and I first call on Bobby Cantwell, if you would please come up. There is no yellow light. It's green for 30 seconds and then it's red, FYI.

BOBBY CANTWELL (Clayton Town Board Member): Thank you. Good evening. My name is Bobby Cantwell and I represent the Town of Clayton. As well, I am running for the New York State Assembly's 118th Assembly District, the River District.

The IJC Plan 2007 represents business as usual, which is the result of 50 years of documented environmental damage. It fails to provide access to the fish breeding grounds. It fails to provide for wintering mammals. It also fails to provide a natural variability necessary for wetlands.

It also is very disheartening that we have spent \$20 million on a study that wouldn't necessarily initiate any change at all.

Plan B+, a scientifically based and publicly endorsed plan. This would deliver specific environmental improvements, benefits to the environment because it allows more natural fluctuation of the river levels. It provides a sustainable water level management plan.

I am here this evening point blank to endorse Plan B+ and I applaud the efforts to everyone as well as the panel and everyone in this room. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Okay. Next we have Justin Taylor. And to be ready following Justin, Addie Russell.

JUSTIN TAYLOR (Town Supervisor, Town of Clayton): Good evening. My name is Justin Taylor, I am the Town Supervisor of the Town of Clayton, just up river from here.

On behalf of the thousands of year-round residents and the thousands of seasonal residents that visit of the Town of Clayton, I am here as the chief elected officer in that community.

On behalf of the Town Board, I want you to know that we adopted a resolution after our own close review of Plan B+ and the studies that were circulated to us a while back.

We took careful pause and moment to look at that report as it was presented to us. And based on our review, we felt that B+ was the based for our community.

The business and tourism communities will be significantly negatively impacted if you use Plan 2007, which you have floated as being an alternative to the study plans that were presented.

We understand your mission. We understand that you have a difficult task in front of you. We also understand that there is a tremendous amount of political influence that is being pressed upon you from both the Canadian and the U.S. side to adopt plans, and you have been given the resources to establish studies, but we urge you to consider, reconsider B+ as what is the most viable for our community.

At the information session that was presented a month or so ago here in this same room, one of your staff members said that we will start to lower the water level at the end of summer.

And we asked what the definition of the end of summer was, and his response was August 15th. August 15th is not the end of summer or the tourist season in the Thousand Islands. You might think more closely to October 15th.

And so once again, I would just urge you to consider Plan B+ as what is most viable for our community. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Justin. Next, Addie Russell. And next would be Phil Reed, if you wanted to get yourself ready. Addie?

ADDIE JENNE RUSSELL (Jefferson County Board of Legislators): Good evening. I am Addie Jenne Russell. I am a Jefferson County Legislator and I represent Philly, Theresa, Antwerp, and the village of Evans Mills.

Our board voted several months ago in support of Plan B, and we have a letter that has been submitted during the comment period which again restates that we are in full support as a board of B+, and I'm sure that Legislator Phil Reed will also speak to that.

I would just like to reiterate that I fully support what has been presented in the written comments from the Board and the resolution that our board passed.

Beyond that, I am a resident of Jefferson County. I use the river for recreational purposes. I have friends and family and neighbours who rely on the river for providing for their families, it's how they earn their living.

Several years ago, I had the wonderful opportunity to help push our family's boat out of the mud not too far from here. The water levels are let out far too low and far too early. October is certainly within the realm of our summer here, especially when we have beautiful late summers, and it's some of the best time to enjoy the water.

I certainly am supportive of going in a new direction that will help to ensure that the water levels are not as severely changing so that you can be out boating one weekend in October and then the next have to go push your boat out of the mud.

I am also concerned about the water levels during the wintertime. It's not just a summer tourism issue, but it's also an issue for those who utilize the river and the ice during the winter.

You can be ice fishing and have quite a gap between the actual ice and the water. And as the spouse of an ice fisherman, it certainly concerns me that there is the lack of support against the ice because the water has been let out. And also, he's not going to bring home fish to eat, so...although we won't have to clean them.

But I would just like to reiterate that I am fully support of Plan B+. It is a departure from what I think everyone realizes is a plan that is not working, especially for this region. And I thank you for the opportunity to comment.

(APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Addie. Phil Reed, followed by Michael Docteur.

PHIL REED (Jefferson County Board of Legislators): Hi, my name is Phil Reed, Jefferson County Legislature, for representing District 3, which is Alexandria, Orleans, and part of Leray. I also chair the General Services Committee, which is in charge of transportation and the likes.

I am here tonight to expound on the virtues of Plan B+ also. But to give you folks some idea of what we've gone through or...a lot of us have parents, grandparents and great-grandparents that were promised a myriad of things.

I have a book here that was promised...that when the seaway came in, we were promised jobs, ports, the cheapest electricity in the world. (LAUGHS) We currently, if you look at the DOE, we're currently – poor Connecticut beat us out – we're currently third most expensive state for power.

Jefferson County receives little or no direct benefit from what they went through, and it's realized now, 50 years later. But we do want...we have an opportunity right now that has tourism, industry, and environmentalists working together with a common goal, and that's for the benefit of all our residents.

I am here representing Jefferson County, and that's my job. There is a myriad of agencies that are for wetland restoration, were petitioning the United States Government for wetland restoration. Arguably, Plan B+ provides some of that restoration immediately and over a long term without tax dollars.

We see a lot of different benefits from Plan B+. One of the most important things, and you'll probably hear it tonight over and over again, is our economy here is a struggle. We rely on tourism, agriculture. Fort Drum, we're running out of paper mills. We have little industry, but tourism industry is very important to our sustainability as a county.

And we need water in those bookend months, especially at the end of August. It doesn't take long for a visitor to come up, spend money, and have to pull their boat out or not be able to put their boat in on Labour Day. They won't come back. You know, we're fighting invasive species, we're fighting...other ports of interest want our business.

So we're here to ask you to reconsider and look at Plan B+. That's the interest that best benefits us. And I know, I read the book, that's a compromise between all of the interests; sometimes I feel here that we get compromised right out of some water, and that means dollars and jobs and environmental benefits for our county. I thank you for your time. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you. Phil? Phil? We have a question for you.

PHIL REED: Okay.

ALLEN OLSON (Commissioner, U.S. Section, International Joint Commission): Did you say that that or another copy would be filed for our record? I'd like to look at that...

PHIL REED: This book?

ALLEN OLSON: Yeah.

PHIL REED: Sure. It's my father's...

ALLEN OLSON: I don't want to take that one from you. Maybe there's
(inaudible)...

PHIL REED: He'd never let you have it, to be honest with you.
(LAUGHS) I'll make sure you get a copy.

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you. Thank you, Phil. Sam? We have another
question. You were just too good. (LAUGHS)

SAM SPECK (Commissioner, U.S. Section, International Joint
Commission): But it's one that's more general. With these plans and with 2007,
you know, one of the things we're trying to do with that and B+ is deal with the
problem we have in terms of preserving the wetlands, and that could involve
some lowering periodically. I take it that that's something you can live with since
it would be done on a more limited basis.

PHIL REED: I'm sorry, can you expound on that? When are you talking
about? Are you talking about lowering?

SAM SPECK: Every 20 years or so, I mean, there would be a special
raising and a special lowering to deal with the problem of losing the vegetation
that we have had and the animal life that lived with that vegetation in the
wetlands, and that presumably is important with respect to the fishery, etc. I take
it that you don't have any problems with that.

PHIL REED: There is a balance, and that's what we feel that B+ provides
that balance better than 2007. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Okay, thank you, Phil. Michael Docteur, followed by Tom Nichols.

MICHAEL DOCTEUR (Jefferson County Board of Legislators): Good evening. Michael Docteur, Jefferson County Legislator, and I have the privilege of representing the Saint Lawrence River communities of Clayton and Cape Vincent.

The Jefferson County Board of Legislators, as you have already heard, have supported Plan B+, and we certainly oppose Plan 2007. Plan B+ improves the river's health and its economy. B+ supports – we just talked about it a minute ago – the fluctuation of our wetlands.

And of course, the cleansing of our wetlands is...our wetlands act as filters for this river system. These wetlands produce breeding grounds for many of the aquatic species, including our game fish population, which has been declining in recent years. Our wetlands are very important to this region.

Plan B+ also provides higher water levels in the critical later summer and early fall weeks. This Plan B+ will enable our businesses, our business community the opportunity to serve our visiting public and ensure our local vibrant economy.

Families today are challenged with energy costs. The Thousand Islands region provides an economical and quality vacation destination for many. We have had our season shortened dramatically due to lower water levels in the late summer/early fall period.

Plan 2007 will continue to short-change this region. It's a very important tourist destination for our families of New York, Ontario; we're all in this together.

In closing, I am asking the IJC not to ignore the results of a \$20 million study that clearly indicated that Plan B+ is the best plan for the health and economy of our river.

I'm asking the Commission not to ignore the families, this great resource for recreation. I am asking you not to ignore our local businesses. And I'm also asking you not to ignore the will of the people. Please adopt Plan B+.

(APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Michael.

MICHAEL DOCTEUR: Thank you.

IRENE BROOKS: Any questions? Tom Nichols, followed by Richard Drake.

TOM NICHOLS (Saint Lawrence County Legislator): Members of the Commission, I want to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to speak to you. For quite some time, you have been the basis of a great deal of criticism because we have not had these kinds of hearings in Saint Lawrence County or in Jefferson County to have the benefit of speaking with you, so I do want to thank you very much for that.

I currently serve in my 15th year as a county legislator from Saint Lawrence County, which, as you know, contains most of the Saint Lawrence

River. And I'm here to say tonight, number one, that I do support B+ emphatically.

I speak as an individual. I am not the chairman of the Saint Lawrence County Legislature, but I can share with you that the entire Legislature voted unanimously several months ago to support Plan B+ for a multitude of reasons.

Economically, it is imperative that you support B+. Saint Lawrence County is the third lowest per capita income county in New York State. Our people are hurting.

General Motors announced this year they're closing their plant, which was one of the largest employers in Saint Lawrence County. That's putting 500 people and their families out of jobs. It couldn't come at a worse time.

Our local businesses that are left along the river that work so hard to attract tourism need to have the river with enough water in it for them to attract people to come to their business, be it for tourism or for the purchase of various supplies or products or boats and the like.

For the purposes of shipping, Ogdensburg contains the only American port along the river. Ogdensburg needs to have water in the river enough to attract ships that can carry more products, larger quantities, to make sure that they are competitive so they'll use our ports.

Environmentally, Saint Lawrence County already gave at the office. When the seaway was put through, thousands of acres of new wetlands were

indeed created. We lost entire communities to create this system that everyone from Minnesota to the Atlantic Ocean benefits from. We gave at the office.

For years, we have suffered while a lot of the traffic went by, traffic which used to come to Ogdensburg, go inland by rail and give literally thousands of our people jobs. Those jobs dried up when the seaway came through.

And yet we have been very supportive of trying to maintain a proper seaway. Unfortunately, our cries and concerns about water levels have gone unheeded. If you talk to the people, if you heard them in Massena, you heard them say that in Lewisville specifically, they received the worst end of it because they have seen water levels drop 7, 8, 10 feet.

Dalton...Dalton, where are you, Dalton? Dalton is over there. Dalton can speak to you, as I'm sure he has, and tell you how docks have literally come out of the water, how boats were stranded many feet away from the rest of the river because that end of the river had to be dropped so low to allow the rest of the Great Lakes to drain.

Another one of the hats that I wear is as the second vice-president of the New York State Association of Conservation Districts. The president of that group is Brad Rogers, and some of you may know Brad because he's been very much involved in the Great Lakes Coalition study and working to maintain levels.

So it's no surprise that you're well aware of the fact that levels on the Great Lakes, especially in the largest lake, have dropped some 15 feet, and in

some places much further than that. We don't need to get rid of more water. We need to hold it back, and this is a great place where you can start.

Environmentally, I already spoke about the fact that wetlands...we've got plenty of wetlands, I believe that Plan B+ effectively protects those wetlands. But I'll go further: we have private landowners that are very proud of their property, and every year they see damage and they see the inability for them to enjoy their properties like the folks on Lake Ontario can because the water levels have dropped so low they can't get their boats in the water. They can't enjoy the property that they pay very much in the way of land tax to keep.

2007 threatens our future in Saint Lawrence County. We will not stand for it any longer. My colleague told you in Massena that he would consider suing if indeed Plan 2007 is utilized. I do not come to you tonight to be confrontational, but I will tell you that I will join him in trying to make that happen.

(APPLAUSE)

But I can also state that I will not stop there. I will also approach my friends in Jefferson County, my counterparts who serve in the Jefferson County Legislature, and I will ask them for their support because we need to stand together as communities to say that we have spoken out. Our people, our businesses, and our properties are just as important as those on Lake Ontario and we demand equal consideration. (APPLAUSE)

I would further ask for both governments that you would consider at some point in time appointing a representative who lives near the Saint Lawrence River to reflect our interests on this board. (APPLAUSE)

I respect your work and appreciate the difficulty that you face as you hear from people who have concerns of varied interests throughout the entire Great Lakes system. But I will tell you that it is unfair that we at this end of the river, who do receive the impact of what is done throughout the entire system, to not have a voice to join with yours as you debate and deliberate those issues.

So I thank you for your consideration and hope that you'll consider supporting B+. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Tom? Tom? You'll have to get out of the hot seat for a minute. I think we have a question for Tom.

JACK BLANEY (Commissioner, Canadian Section, International Joint Commission): Well, actually, just a point of information.

TOM NICHOLS: Yes.

JACK BLANEY: First of all, I'm very pleased that you're, and I clearly can feel your passion and understand what you're saying. As a point of information, the International Joint Commission, which is an international treaty organization and which is covered by the Geneva Convention, cannot be sued, so you'd have to find someone else to sue.

TOM NICHOLS: Well, I can assure you that we will seek recourse however we can do that. And I don't mean it as a threat, but we simply want to be heard. (APPLAUSE)

JACK BLANEY: I just wanted to make that point. The other previous speaker, again just for information, the Study Board, the \$20 million study, by the way, did not recommend B+ as the best option; it presented the International Joint Commission with three options. That's just for the record.

TOM NICHOLS: Well, and for the record, I believe that your 20 million would be best spent supporting that B+ option. I thank you for hearing me. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Tom. You must be Richard Drake.

RICHARD DRAKE (Village Trustee, Alexandria Bay): Yes, ma'am.

IRENE BROOKS: All right, you're on.

RICHARD DRAKE: I am a village trustee in Alexandria Bay. Welcome to our beautiful village in Alexandria Bay. There's a couple...many things, I guess, many things I really would like to say.

First of all, all of the presenters before me, I support them 100 per cent. Right after your last information meeting, I went to the village board and we did a resolution, unanimously passed, and it went on into our State Senate. So this has got pretty good political attention.

At the present time, I'm also working on some grants for a river walk as well as some of our other communities, and this is to take a view of the beautiful

Saint Lawrence River, the ships that go up and down, and the recreation boaters and a few (?) like this.

And when you put our water level way down below, what's going to happen to our shipping? What's going to happen to our boating? What's going to happen to our view? Am I spinning my wheels for nothing?

I am going to sit (?) here and say we need the water. We need Plan B+. This is how...we're also trying to extend their season. In one way, if we can extend it well into October, we have to keep our water up. We need Plan B+.

And I want it on record that the Village of Alexandria Bay, as I'm elected trustee, I thank you for coming up here, thank you for your public hearing, and thank you for your time. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Richard. That completes the list of elected officials who requested to speak first. Now we start with the list, and we have quite a number of you who would like to speak, starting off with Coleman Baker. Coleman? Followed by Jack Hooper. I thought you were Coleman.

COLEMAN BAKER: Welcome, commissioners and representatives of the International Joint Commission, and thank you for providing me the opportunity to influence this matter.

You have an immense and a hugely important task. I have just a few quick points to make. I hear that you return to the original plan for guidance and language. Please consider the words written in 1963 may not have the same meaning as they have today.

Other words, many of which we would like to see in the revisions, were not mentioned in Plan 1958D. Take the word environment. According to online etymology, environment was first used in an ecological sense in 1972.

I think that if the original framers of the Orders of Approval and the early commissioners were drafting their plan tonight, they would most certainly provide a seat at the table for the new guy, environment. For example, we need higher highs, allowing wetlands to fully fill, in order to promote restoration of important fish species.

My second point stems from recent newspaper reports of another river on this continent. Last week, three sentences appeared in an Associated Press article on June 18th in the Watertown Times. I believe they inform our current moment and plan writing (?).

I am quoting three sentences: “But even as the water jeopardized scores of additional homes and businesses, officials said the damage could have been a lot worse if the federal government had not taken steps to clear flood-prone land after historic floods in 1993.”

Number two: “Officials said the cost would have been even higher if the federal government had not purchased low-lying land after the 1993 deluge which caused \$12 billion in damage.”

Sentence three: “The government brought out...excuse me. Sentence three: “The government bought out more than 9,000 homeowners, turning much

of the land into parks and undeveloped areas that can be allowed to flood with less risk.”

And I remind you that we moved 650 families from their homes when we began this undertaking 50 years ago.

You know times have changed. You know this new word should be strongly considered as you go about nominating a plan for IJC approval. We empower you to craft a plan we can support.

Have the courage to do the right thing. Do the right thing for the wetlands that remain, for the fish, for our prosperity, and to protect the largest reserve of fresh water on the planet.

Maybe in 2020, we'll read in the news and see how our governments, through the good work of the International Joint Commission, did the right thing back in 2008. In modern times, as I've just read you, doing the right thing is not unprecedented. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Coleman. Jack Hooper, followed by Jan Brabant. I'm sorry if I mispronounced your name, I hope you know who you are. Jack?

JACK HOOPER (International Water Level Coalition): I'm Jack Hooper. I am with the International Water Level Coalition, so you already know that I support Plan B+. Tonight, I am speaking as an individual. I even took off my Yankee hat. (LAUGHS)

I am personally disappointed in each and every one of the commissioners. Irene, in particular, you toured our area. You saw what low water does to us. You should know better. I feel you have harmed millions to protect a few hundred. That's irresponsible and it's just not fair.

We know how to make water. It's simple, you burn hydrogen. What we don't know is how to do it on a large enough scale to make a difference, so we're dependent on Mother Nature. What we get in the spring and throughout the boating season is all the water we have to work with. When you release water from Lake Ontario, we never get it back until the next season.

That's why I favour Plan B+. It keeps what water we have in the spring for a longer period of time over the boating season. Plan B+ does not raise the level of Lake Ontario. Mother Nature does that at her whim.

Whatever plan you adopt, you will do the most harm if you deviate from the plan to keep water levels near their minimum. Please adopt Plan B+ and please do not let the Board of Control deviate from the plan. Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Jack. Jan Brabant? Followed by Teddy McNally.

JAN BRABANT (Thousand Island Adventures LLC): Hello, my name is Jan Brabant. I represent TI Adventures. I'm a small business and I thought small businesses are what's driving the economy now. And at this time, I'd like to

thank Mother Nature for helping me in my decision because my business depends on the wetlands, with the kayak tours, the kayak rentals.

Last fall, you know, late last fall, it was really nice to real low water levels because it oxygenates all of those sediments so it breaks down. Because over the 25 years that I've been running TI Adventures, I'm seeing these wetlands get all clogged up.

And then this spring, it was so great, I went down to set some rental people out, and what did I see flowing down the creek? Clumps of marsh, nature naturally cleaning itself out.

So on that premise, you know, and thank God for the Ottawa River being really high this year, you know, to give me that information, you know, because they couldn't let any more water out the dam because they'd flood Montreal.

But it was so neat, like, to see what happened in the old days, how the marsh cleans itself out, these big huge clumps, I had to go down there and push them out, you know.

So on that premise, I strongly support Plan B in the research that I've done. I want to see you try to come back to those natural fluctuations which we desperately need. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Jan. Teddy McNally, followed by John Peach.

TEDDY MCNALLY: My name is Teddy McNally. I'm a Wellesley Island, New York, property owner, and I'm also a resident of Chicago, Illinois,

and therefore have the good luck to enjoy this wonderful fresh water system from the southwestern end of the Great Lakes as well as here on the Saint Lawrence River.

I'm retired from business, I now devote much of my time to various non-profit organizations, three of which relate to the subject at hand, water levels. I serve on the boards of Save the River, Thousand Islands Safe Boating Association, and the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York. I know you are familiar with Save the River, and from my attire, I trust you know that I believe Plan B+ is best for this great waterway. (APPLAUSE)

I'm going to focus my comments on my personal beliefs, but also quote several sources relating to the Antique Boat Museum. The Museum attracts 40,000 people over the summer season to visit the Museum and attend boat shows. It has been cited as a great example of revitalization that is needed in more abundance in the Thousand Islands.

One of the measurements of success cited is environmental sustainability. This leads me to the recent edition of the Gazette, journal of the Antique Boat Museum, spring 2008 edition, recently published, which outlines the Museum's revised strategic plan, including an edition on sustainability, and I quote from page 5: "Part of the Antique Boat Museum's mission is committed to preserve the unique artefacts of the fresh water culture of the Saint Lawrence River and Thousand Islands and to enhance public understanding and appreciation of the contributions of the Saint Lawrence River to North America's boating history."

If the river were to die while we preserve the boats, then what is the point.

(APPLAUSE)

Therefore, the Museum is committed to pursuing sustainability and to working closely with other community organizations to promote and amplify our common goals of caring for our local and global environments.

To me, it is simple. I realize your decision is not. The environment is the umbrella issue. If you don't protect the environment, everything else doesn't really matter. Docks under water, docks out of water. Too many fish and wildlife, too few fish and wildlife. Shoreline erosion, shoreline protection.

If the river were to die, who cares about the rest. Choose the plan that is best for the umbrella issue, the environment, Plan B+. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you. Any questions? It is truly a beautiful museum. You are next and you are John Peach.

JOHN PEACH: Good evening.

UNIDENTIFIED: (inaudible)...

IRENE BROOKS: Yes, it is.

JOHN PEACH: My name is John Peach, and my children are fifth generation residents of the Thousand Islands and eastern shore of Lake Ontario. My friends and family are all long-time islanders and boaters, and we are very aware of the convenience of a stable water level on the river, but we also know there's something bigger and more important than convenient boating going on in this decision.

The truth is the river that we love has been damaged by water level regulation that does not allow for enough natural fluctuation. Unnatural control of water levels since the 1950s has severely hurt our river. It has hurt the things we care about, like the native fish populations, clean water for drinking and swimming, and it has hurt our natural resources and tourism-based economy.

Admittedly, we didn't know these things 50 years ago when the current plan was adopted, but the fact is we do know it today. We know the river needs higher water in the winter to allow mammals to clear out the overgrown cattails. We know it sometimes needs low water to allow other plants to re-establish themselves.

These facts may not be comfortable or convenient, but we know them. Partly we know them because of your \$20 million study that in no uncertain terms lays out a choice.

The people around the lake and the river can keep bickering about high water versus low water and looking out for their own narrow interests or we can all band together and do the right thing for the resource that sustains us, our magnificent Saint Lawrence River.

You, the IJC commissioners, have all the information you need to make the right choice. Don't hesitate, don't shy away, don't put this decision on hold. Implement Plan B+ immediately. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, John. David Torrey, followed by Jennifer Caddick.

DAVID TORREY: Madam Chairman, co-chairman Gray, thank you for this opportunity. I would commend the Commission for the amount of notification and the exemplary way in which you have endeavoured to gather opinion.

I do not wish to repeat a lot of the comments that have been made earlier. I radically support Plan B+. One of your commissioners observed that you cannot be sued. I would submit to you that your respective governments can be sued.

And I would like to turn some of the very positive comments about Plan B around on their heads and point out to you that the tax base for all of the counties and towns along the river depend very much on the property values that go with waterfront property.

And not only that, most of those communities, the waterfront properties are the ones that bear most of the taxes for those communities. The ones in the hinterlands pay a lot less. (APPLAUSE)

And I would submit to you, commissioners...and I recognize you're between a rock and a hard place. And if I can judge by the audience here tonight, this is the rock, you've got the hard place. (LAUGHS)

IRENE BROOKS: (inaudible)...rock.

DAVID TORREY: Don't destroy the tax base of the communities along this river because that is what will happen. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Hi, Jennifer,

JENNIFER CADDICK (Executive Director, Save the River): Thank you, Chairwoman Brooks and commissioners, for the opportunity to speak tonight. I am Jennifer Caddick, I am the Executive Director of Save the River, but I am also the Upper Saint Lawrence river keeper.

Thirty years ago this year, Save the River was formed by citizens to give voice to the fact that the Saint Lawrence River is a magnificent place that deserves our protection.

Today, Save the River represents thousands of people who live, work, and raise families along the river, and we are here once again to reiterate our support for Plan B+, the only water level plan that will restore the river ecosystem.

Tonight's hearing is feeling a bit like déjà vu. We were here eight years ago when you asked Save the River to participate as a member of your Public Interest Advisory Board. We were here in 2006 commenting on the three draft plans presented by that study. And we were here a month ago at your public information sessions.

We are here because you tell us that you want our input and that it is instrumental, along with sound science, in reaching your final decision on this issue.

Our request, as well as the request of numerous citizens, conservation groups, government agencies, and elected officials, has been constant: a water levels management plan that reverses 50 years of significant environmental damage. (APPLAUSE)

Yet we are incredible disillusioned by your announcement of Plan 2007 and feel that you have not been listening to the public input or to the scientific and legal facts of this issue. (APPLAUSE)

It is a fact that sound science shows that the current water levels management plan has significantly degraded the environment of the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario.

It is a fact that Plan B+ is the only management plan that will restore, in one fell swoop, tens of thousands of acres of wetlands. It is a fact that you have the legal authority to implement Plan B+ now.

During the information sessions, we heard from the commissioners or their staff that you cannot implement Plan B+ because of legal constraints in the Boundary Waters Treaty.

Upon hearing that, we reached out to experts in this field of law and dissected this important question and we discovered that in fact, it is clear that you do have the authority to implement B+ without indemnifying riparian landowners. (APPLAUSE)

It is a fact that you have the overwhelming support, as you can see here tonight, from the majority of the public, government agencies, and elected officials. Politicians on both sides of the border have supported Plan B+, from Congressman John McHugh, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, MPP Bob Runciman, the Governor of the State of New York, and many local and regional officials who you have heard from this evening.

Numerous government agencies on both sides of the border have supported Plan B+. And you have heard many, many times this evening and will continue to hear this evening that residents and visitors to the Saint Lawrence River support Plan B+.

Numerous environmental and conservation groups representing thousands of members throughout the Great Lakes region on both sides of the border have spoken out in support of B+, groups ranging from Ducks Unlimited to the Nature Conservancy, Isaac Walton League, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Environmental Advocates of New York, Great Lakes United, Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation and others.

In fact, this issue is so critical that the national river advocacy group American Rivers has weighed in by selecting the Saint Lawrence River as one of the top 10 most endangered rivers in the United States. (APPLAUSE)

You have even heard from residents of lakeshore communities who have spoken out on behalf of the lake environment. Everyone in this room may be shocked to hear that the Citizens Campaign for the Environment, a state-wide environmental organization, has collected more than 4,000 signatures from community members in Greece, the lakeshore community, in support of Plan B+. (APPLAUSE) What else do you need to show public support for Plan B+?

You tell us that you want to hear the views of the public, that comments from the public will be given full consideration, but you have to admit we're a bit

sceptical. Over the past eight years, you've heard loud and clear that the public wants an environmental plan, yet you delivered Plan 2007.

Of course, there are opponents to Plan B+. We recognize that. However, these opponents, whether they are property owners on the south shore of Lake Ontario or shipping interests that you heard from last night, have already received 50 years of substantial financial benefits from the current management plan.
(APPLAUSE)

Plan B+ will not remove those benefits. Instead, it will slightly reduce those benefits to property owners and shippers and replace them with significant environmental benefits to the river and lake environment, which has been the loser for 50 years under the current management plan.

It seems that the trade-off is more than fair and fits with your objective of finding a more balanced management plan to regulating water levels on the river and Lake Ontario.

So to conclude, my understanding is that your charge as commissioners is to use scientific and legal facts, along with a healthy dose of public opinion, to make a decision.

So let's look at your checklist. Sound science? Check, you've got that. Legal authority? Check, you've got that. Public support? I think you definitely have that, at least tonight.

And we feel it is high time that you, the independent commissioners of the International Joint Commission, make the decision to protect the environment of

the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. You have the tools right in front of you to do so. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Jennifer? We do have a question. Chair Gray?

UNIDENTIFIED: (inaudible)...encore. (LAUGHS)

JENNIFER CADDICK: I'm always happy to answer questions.

HERB GRAY (Chair, Canadian Section, International Joint Commission): Thank you for your very effective and impressive presentation. And you set out a checklist of things we can do, but I think that there is one that you didn't mention, and that is that we're obliged in this particular matter to obtain the concurrence of the two national governments to any new plan or order we adopt.

So you said that we have the authority to adopt B+, you said that there's no legal impediment, but what do you say about the requirement to obtain the concurrence of the two national governments of Canada and the U.S.?

JENNIFER CADDICK: Well, I think you have a significant responsibility and an obligation to work with those two governments to explain to them the scientific facts and the public opinion that's been placed before them.

And we certainly, on behalf of Save the River, are willing to be a partner with you to convince the two governments, the governments of the U.S. and Canada, to make the right decision. (APPLAUSE)

HERB GRAY: Thank you.

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Jennifer. Next we have Sid Quarrier - I'm not sure if I'm pronouncing that correctly – followed by Pam Judson.

SID QUARRIER: Thank you for allowing me to speak. Thank you, Jennifer. My name is Sid Quarrier, I am a property owner on the river in Chippewa Bay and a summer resident of the area for about 70 years.

I'd like to point out two patterns of change that I have seen on the river over my time here that I think are relevant to tonight. Over the past two or three decades, there has been an increasing public commitment to conservation and protecting biodiversity, both here and in Canada, through a national park, through acquisitions of wild lands by land trusts, and also through public participation in allowing regulation of wetlands and near-shore areas. This has been a tremendous commitment.

Actually, in Chippewa Bay, we seemed to see a payoff from this last year. For the first time in a number of decades, a bald eagle nested there. Not just because the place it nested was relatively wild, but because there were accessible wild lands on both the Canadian side and on the American side that had been protected by a large public commitment for protection.

The other change that we have seen, as reported by ecologists, is a loss of biodiversity and productivity in the river system because of water level management, which has increasingly diverged from natural changes, favouring weed-like species and invasives rather than sustaining the native plant communities and animals that have adapted to the area over centuries under natural water level regimes.

And the current management continues to degrade biodiversity and productivity. It is actually quite ironic that there is a growing public commitment to conservation and protection of biodiversity and for decades, water level management working in the reverse direction.

I'd like to comment for a minute on the importance of our area of the Saint Lawrence River, from Morristown to Cape Vincent, both on the Canadian and U.S. side. Our section of the river has relatively high quality shoreline and near-shore, low wave energy, diverse physically, rocky shores, shallows, extensive backwaters.

It is diverse biologically and productive, and it is particularly susceptible to water level change regimes which affect the native species which were adapted to different water level changes.

Our shoreline is very different than the seemingly large Lake Ontario shoreline and near-shore, which has a higher wave energy, rock and shingle and sand shores, and is less physically diverse and less productive.

Our section of the river, though, seemingly short in distance – 20 or 30 or 40 miles – is no small backwater. About ten years ago, I submitted a letter to this commission as I had spent a night calculating the total shoreline area of the district from Morristown to Cape Vincent, measuring the perimeter of all little islands and all the backwaters, and it came out approximately equal to the total shoreline of Lake Ontario, and so that... (APPLAUSE)

And while that was a one-night stand of measuring, and I wouldn't bet my house mortgage on it, the point is that this land is not only very diverse and biologically productive, but it's as large as the greater area and it is a very significant part of the land area that your management regime manages.

So considering the great diversity and productivity of our river shoreline and its approximate size, equal to the shoreline of Lake Ontario, we could consider our river section as the ecological lungs of the waterway area that you manage.

This critical area of biodiversity and productivity, despite the public commitment for conservation, has suffered for decades from water level management that diminishes its biodiversity and productivity.

I therefore believe it is necessary for the Commission to reverse water management schemes and choose Plan B+, which more nearly approximates a natural system, and support for a change the large public commitment of conservation and protection of biodiversity and to protect the health of the ecological lungs of our regional waterway. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Sid. Pam Judson, followed by Steve LaPan.

PAM JUDSON: Good evening. My name is Pam Judson and I live in Fishers Landing. My husband and I are very familiar with the Saint Lawrence River. He started coming up here with his family when he was 3, and I started coming up here with my family when I was 5.

We are also very familiar with the south shore of Lake Ontario, as we were born and raised in the Rochester area. My grandmother lived about a mile from the lake. His grandparents lived on Long Pond, a stone's throw from the lake. His aunt lived on the lake, and his parents had a summer cottage on the lake.

After we married, we lived about four miles from the lake and often when to Hamlin Beach State Park for picnics and swimming. Our kids used to bike to the lake to swim.

That being said, you can see we love both the lake and the river. We made a choice to move up here to the Saint Lawrence River when my husband retired ten years ago so we could enjoy all our great passions: fishing, swimming, boating, jet skiing, and watching the ships, to name a few.

We found the house we now live in, which is right on the river. I might add we live here year-round. We have seen the river water levels steadily going down while our property assessment has gone steadily up. Our most recent assessment was raised by \$90,000.

When we bought our house, we were able to bring our boat up to the dock, even though we have a large shoal in front of our property. In 2003, due to the low water level, we had to have the river dredged in front of our house, our neighbour's house to the left and our neighbours' houses – three of them – to the left so we could get open access water for our boats. This cost us \$10,000, which was split by our neighbours to the right.

Because of the extremely low water level last year, we were forced to take our boats and jet ski out of the water in August, and we once again began the process last fall of applying to the DEC and Army Corps of Engineers for a permit to blast and dredge straight out from our property to gain access to the river, which, when we applied last fall, was going to cost us another \$20,000.

As of right now, we still do not have the permit and we are quite sure, with the rising cost of fuel, that the price is going to increase if and when we get the blasting and dredging permit.

I know there are people on the south shore of the lake that would love to see the water levels stay low. I can probably take you right to their houses. I also know that most of those folks that want the water level to remain low live on a sandbar. That's right, a sandbar.

Many, many years ago, their now-homes were cottages, and most of them were built on pillars. Why? Because every once in a while, the natural water level would be high and would surround these cottages and the water would even flood the street behind their cottages.

Through the years, the upper class people from the city of Rochester decided they wanted to live on the lake and began buying up these cottage properties on the lake when they became available, tearing down the cottages and building beautiful homes.

However, they didn't build them on pillars. They built them on the ground, and guess what? They are still on a sandbar, and when the water gets

high, they get flooding. Now I'm not saying these folks should all sell their homes, but I am saying they were pretty stupid to build on a sandbar. (APPLAUSE)

Why is it that the folks along the south shore of Lake Ontario feel their homes and their businesses are more important than the people and businesses along the Saint Lawrence River? Have they stopped to think of the impact the low water brings on the river commerce, from the lake freighters and ocean-going vessels that travel the seaway? I think not.

It's time these selfish individuals remembered that this impacts a lot more citizens of this state than them. There are a lot more homes, cottages, and businesses that are affected by the low water level up here on the river than those homes along the lake when the water level is high. (APPLAUSE)

I have seen the lake at its highest level several times over the years, but I have never seen the river as low as it was last summer. If you put in place Plan 2007, all the river properties will be in jeopardy. River dwellers will be dredging and blasting at a very costly expense just to enjoy their homes. Environmentally, this will be more detrimental to the river.

The only logical answer to the water level situation is Plan B+, not Plan 2007. Please think long and hard before making a decision to implement Plan 2007. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Okay, thank you, Pam. Steve LaPan, followed by Heather White. Thank you.

STEVE LAPAN (Lake Ontario Fisheries Unit Leader, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation): I am Steve LaPan, Lake Ontario Fisheries Unit Leader for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

I'd like to extend our gratitude to Chairwoman Brooks, Chairman Gray and the other commissioners for the opportunity to offer our brief comments on IJC's proposed water level regulation plan for Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River, referred to as Plan 2007.

The Department emphasizes the widespread environmental damages that have resulted from the current regulation plan 1958DD, and in particular the degradation of coastal wetlands that provide feeding, breeding, and nursery areas for a host of fish and wildlife species.

The most environmentally damaging aspects of Plan 1958DD are the reduction of the overall range of water levels as well as deviations from natural seasonal patterns and long-term trends.

In order to improve the diversity and ecological function of Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River wetlands, as well as the extent of dunes and beaches, a candidate regulation plan must move toward a more natural range of seasonal and annual water levels.

The Department and a number of Great Lakes environmental scientists view seasonal aspects of Plan 2007 as potentially more damaging to the environment than Plan 1958DD.

On the graph that I have provided you, please note that average water levels generated by Plan 1958DD are represented by the solid black line, with Plan 2007 in the solid yellow line and Plan B+ in the solid blue line.

Please refer to the circle on the right-hand side of the graph, under the number 1, and note please that on average, water levels under Plan 2007 would actually be lower than Plan 1958DD starting about the 1st of October, and these conditions would persist throughout the winter months.

Lower levels under Plan 2007 in winter will further exacerbate the declines in muskrat populations experienced under Plan 1958DD, and you'll note that muskrats are a very important player in maintaining the ecological structure and functioning of our wetlands.

Under Plan 1958DD, northern pike spawning has been compromised due to low spring water levels, limiting access of the pike to flooded vegetated areas. Please refer to the average spring water levels within the circle under the number 2 on the graph and note that under Plan 2007, water levels would remain below those of Plan 1958DD until the early part of May. This timing is roughly four weeks after northern pike have initiated their shoreward migration in search of flooded vegetation for spawning.

In addition, Plan 2007 fails to provide sufficiently low water levels favourable for restoring wetland meadow marsh habitats, beaches and dunes, and provides little, if any, additional relief for shoreline property losses.

In the circle above the number 3, please note projections for relatively low water level events that would occur during the growing season and would be experienced during periods of low supply.

Please note that under Plan 2007, water levels would not allow for meadow marsh expansion and would also reduce the necessary replenishing of sand to beach and dune habitats.

Commissioners, Plan 1958DD has been tantamount to an environmental disaster, and Plan 2007 provides no meaningful reparation for these ongoing damages. The Department supports the implementation of Plan B+ in concert with a comprehensive coastal restoration strategy and adaptive management plan.

Plan B+ is the only candidate plan that effectively moves toward restoration of a more natural range of water level flows, seasonally and annually. Plan B+ is also the only candidate plan that infrequently allows water levels to fall low enough during prolonged periods of low supply to rejuvenate meadow marsh habitats and replenish beach and dune habitats.

Commissioners, you are uniquely positioned to choose a regulation plan that, when implemented in conjunction with a coastal restoration strategy, offers the only realistic approach to benefit both the environment and coastal interests. You now face a historic opportunity to improve tens of thousands of acres of environmentally sensitive habitats and the vast array of flora and fauna that they support.

The Department implores the IJC to not delay in the implementation of Plan B+. And we are committed to working with the IJC, government agencies, and our constituents to collaboratively implement a comprehensive coastal zone restoration strategy and adaptive management plan. To not take advantage of this opportunity would be tragic.

We look forward to continuing our discussions with IJC relative to the resolution of outstanding issues related to the implementation of Plan B+. Again, I thank the commissioners for...

(BREAK IN RECORDING – CHANGE IN AUDIO CDS)

DAVID RENZI (New York Senate candidate): ...I hope to come into play in terms of the State of New York. What the State Senate...what I will focus on and what I will propose for them is that a bill be...a resolution be enacted and sent to the Secretary of State, in conjunction with Congressman McHugh's legislation, so that the governments will hear from the jurisdictions of the water that surrounds us.

These are the views that need to be heard, and I appreciate the effort that you are putting in as a board and certainly to provide these public hearings. But it's such a major important and critical issue to our state and to our district, and I say to you, I know Congressman McHugh will fight for this district in his region, and I will fight for this region, and I submit to you Plan B+ is the way to go. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Okay, David. Peter Gibbs.

PETER GIBBS (New York regional biologist, Ducks Unlimited): Thank you for being here and giving us the opportunity to speak. I am sure you're probably a little road-weary, so we appreciate it.

IRENE BROOKS: (inaudible)...not a rock star. (LAUGHS)

PETER GIBBS: My name is Peter Gibbs, I am the New York regional biologist for Ducks Unlimited. DU is a national conservation organization with approximately 1,000,000 supporters and volunteers. Our mission is to protect, restore, enhance and manage wetlands and associated habitats for the benefit of waterfowl, other wildlife, as well as people.

I am here on behalf of the 15,000 members of Ducks Unlimited who reside in New York State as well as the thousands of non-resident members that visit this region for its abundance and diversity of waterfowl.

I am here requesting the International Joint Commission support for Plan B+. Ducks Unlimited's international conservation plan identifies Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River basin as a priority habitat for waterfowl, as does the North American waterfowl management plan.

Hundreds of thousands of ducks and geese rely on this area during spring and fall migration. The Saint Lawrence River Valley is also recognized as one of the most significant duck breeding regions in the northeastern part of the United States.

In addition, Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River are recognized by an array of state and federal agencies, as well as other conservation organizations,

some of which you've heard tonight – Save the River, Thousand Island Land Trust, Ontario Basin Initiative, the Nature Conservancy – as an area of critical habitat for a diverse community of bird and fish species.

Over the past 50 years, the quantity and quality of wetland complexes within the Lake Ontario and Saint Lawrence River basin have declined due primarily to the water level regulations instituted under the 1958D plan.

The recently-completed IJC study indicates that nearly 33,000 acres of productive wetlands have been lost and the diversity of the remaining wetlands has diminished, lessening their productivity for a broad range of fish and wildlife.

Ducks Unlimited, along with other conservation partners, have been working in this region for over 20 years to restore some of this lost habitat and to protect it as well for its importance to waterfowl and other wildlife. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on this effort.

DU is currently working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to restore diversity and productivity to the cattail-dominated wetlands found within the State's French Creek wildlife management area.

This is the first project of many that will target restoring the diversity and productivity of these marshes within eastern Lake Ontario as well as the Saint Lawrence River and their tributaries.

Implementing of Plan B+ will greatly increase the efficacy of our work. It will also restore a much larger area of diverse wetland habitat than we can ever hope to impact in our lifetime.

DU has its mission, and that is why we are supporting – and a strong supporter of – Plan B+, but I think it's also important to acknowledge some of the concerns that I know you've heard along the south shore. And it's with that in mind that we feel it's important to look at implementing a comprehensive shoreline protection plan to address some of those fears.

DU appreciates the opportunity to weigh in on this decision-making process by expressing support for Plan B+. This is a historical moment that will determine the health and well-being of this system for future generations of people as well as the fish and wildlife that depend upon it.

DU strongly urges the IJC to endorse and implement Plan B because it's the most environmentally sound plan and provides the greatest benefits for the majority of interests involved. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Peter. Next we have Bea Schermerhorn. Bea, where are you? I know you're here. Bea Schermerhorn? Oh, you're in the bleachers. You're up, Bea.

BEA SCHERMERHORN: I'm up.

IRENE BROOKS: And you need no introduction.

BEA SCHERMERHORN: You know something? B+ is the best (inaudible)... (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: I knew you were going to do that. (LAUGHS)

BEA SCHERMERHORN: You dared me to do it.

IRENE BROOKS: I know I did. (LAUGHS)

BEA SCHERMERHORN: Oh dear, I broke the thing. (LAUGHS)

IRENE BROOKS: Uh-oh.

BEA SCHERMERHORN: Okay, my name is Bea Schermerhorn and I am a Saint Lawrence River riparian. And I've been involved in water levels issues since 1986. That's 22 years.

We live in a sound bite society today, and so I am going to use that method to share some information this evening. The first sound bite is a bus tour. Back in 1999, Congressman John McHugh sponsored a bus tour of various water-dependent businesses on the eastern end of the lake and on the Saint Lawrence River. The water was extremely low, and he got us a first-hand look at what the present water level control plan has done to the economy and the environment in northern New York.

Commissioner Alice Chamberlin, who was before some of you, at the end of that tour – she was on the tour – and at the end of that tour, she said that the IJC wanted to do a study of the present plan if money was appropriated.

So there were a lot of us that lobbied for that money and we were successful and the study became a reality. As you know, it was five years in duration, \$20 million was spent, and two plans were presented. The third plan was just a rerun of what we've got today.

Okay, commissioners, you chose to trash \$20 million, the three plans, the five years of dedicated work of many people, and without public input or public scrutiny, you came up with this Plan 2007 because you feared that Plan B+ might cause a problem three or four times out of 101 years for the south shore of Lake Ontario. (APPLAUSE)

In these 22 years that I have been fussing around with water, I have seen commissioners come and go, but they all seem to have one thing in common, and that is that when the south shore of Lake Ontario throws a tizzy fit, you all come to their rescue.

When I was being considered for the Lake Ontario-Saint Lawrence River Study Public Interest Advisory Group, which otherwise is known as PIAG, I asked them what the role of the Board of Control would be in the study. I was told they would not be part of the study and they would be held at arm's length. Famous last words because Dr. Frank Sciremammano, a member of the Board of Control, was appointed to the Study Board.

At the time the International Saint Lawrence River Board of Control was increased in size, many of us lobbied against Dr. Sciremammano's appointment because of his very close ties to the south shore interests. The commissioners at that time, as well as you commissioners, vowed that board members are not chosen to represent special areas or interests. I respectfully disagree. Dr. Sciremammano has served the south shore interests well, in my opinion. (APPLAUSE)

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has indicated that they're willing to talk about mitigation, but neither you or the south shore has defined mitigation.

But I can tell you that if you implement Plan 2007, there never will be any mitigation because once more, the south shore will have won, and then who needs mitigation. However, if you implement Plan B+, the south shore will work diligently to see that mitigation does happen.

Commissioners, the south shore needs to be part of the solution because they caused the problem by building in flood-prone areas to begin with and are still doing it. And I know what I'm talking about because I was born in Rochester and I lived there and around that area until I was married.

Commissioners, are you going to do the right thing or is it going to be business as usual? Are you going to implement Plan B+, which, by your own admission, in your own publications, you have said is the better plan? Or is the Saint Lawrence River once again going to be held hostage to the south shore special interests?

Our river is on the list of the ten most endangered rivers in the country, and it's not because of pollution, but rather because of a failed water levels plan and your new Plan 2007, which will do more harm than the present 1958DD.

I ask you to not let a small minority call the shots. Please do what is right. Implement Plan B. Put Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River as back as

close as possible to the way Mother Nature ran things. It is the right thing to do.

(APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Bea. You never disappoint. (LAUGHS)

Thomas Jolliff, followed by Janie Hollister.

THOMAS JOLLIFF: My name is Thomas Jolliff, a resident of Cape Vincent, New York. I'm a retired fisheries biologist. I formerly worked with New York Department of Environmental Conservation on Lake Ontario, Saint Lawrence River, and a whole bunch of other places in New York State. I am speaking just on my own behalf.

I am opposed philosophically to the element of Plan 2007 aimed at mitigation of shoreline damaged by high water. In particular, natural erosion of southern Lake Ontario bluffs has been known to occur for thousands of years.

If persons choose to build structures on those bluffs or in historically flooded areas, it should be with the understanding that they accept full responsibility for damage from those natural phenomena.

Programming mitigation or prevention of such occurrences effectively subsidizes and encourages unintelligent and irresponsible actions at the expense of others. Thank you.

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Thomas. Janie Hollister, followed by Janet Burrows.

JANIE HOLLISTER (Town Supervisor, Town of Hammond): Madam Chairman and members of the Commission, I am Janie Hollister, I am the Town

Supervisor of the Town of Hammond in Saint Lawrence County, and Alexandria's neighbour, the Town of Alexandria's neighbour.

I represent a diverse group. We have a lot of seasonal people and we have a lot of permanent people. We have mainly an agricultural town and a river community. We run from Indian Point to Chippewa Bay, from Chippewa Bay to Oak Point, from Oak Point to the Morristown town line, which is about Blackstone Bay.

We have also Crooked Creek, Chippewa Creek, many, many islands, tourism, businesses, marinas, Singer Castle, Crossover Island, which has just been placed on the National Registry of Historic Lighthouse Places, and we have a lot of tax base on this river community.

As a retired dairy farmer, I realize that this river property is very, very important. Our farmers are decreasing in number. We just sold our cows about a year ago. And no family members are taking over. We have to have something in our town. We are lucky to have this river.

But when we have three boat launches in Cedar Island State Park and the people cannot get their boats out on Labour Day, it's disheartening. These people aren't going to come back.

We probably don't have the tourism that Alexandria Bay has, but we have very, very nice, beautiful areas. I mean, you can still take a canoe out, you can still do kayaking, water skiing and all that. We have many islands that are

multigenerational, handed down from generation to generation. These people care about the river as the full-time residents do.

So please be considerate of our river because we need it. We're not going to be a farming community for much longer. They're dwindling. We need something, and we are fortunate to have this river. But we do need water levels.

It's very disheartening when I get calls on the phone saying, the three boat launches, where can I take my boat out? And I don't have an answer when they're trying to drag them through mud on Labour Day. Thank you very much for your time. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thanks, Janie. Janet Burrows, followed by Lee Willbanks.

JANET BURROWS: Madam Chairperson, commissioners, my name is Janet Burrows, I am a resident of Clayton, New York. I am a newly-retired science educator. And I won't repeat many of the fine things that have been said.

I applaud you for the hours and hours and hours you have devoted to trying to figure out what to do with this beautiful water. The responsibility, though, of such an immense piece of fresh water is overwhelming.

We do need that energy. I pray we have alternatives in the very near future that allow you more freedom in choice to do the environmentally right thing.

No offence, I am such an idealist, B+ doesn't even do it for me. However, I will defer my idealism and ask you to please adopt B+. Know that there will be

generations of people across the globe who will watch and hope that the right decisions – and I don't know how you make that right decision, except with all of the good science, data, that you have.

Take that data, look in your souls – if you believe you have one...I'm not, I'm not...this is hardly the time to make light of that issue. However...(LAUGHS)

We have an incredibly important task that we're asking just a very few of you to perform. We need good science, but we need your good judgements. And I do believe you're listening very, very closely. There's lots and lots of energy alternatives that will be coming soon.

Your administering and management, with all of that data pouring in, because things are going to change, you need to be on top of those levels and the changing meteorological events that will be occurring.

It ain't easy, but I hope that you have all of the available data that you need to make those decisions on an ongoing basis. B+ for now. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Janet. Lee Willbanks, followed by Karl McKinnon.

LEE WILLBANKS (Legislative Director, New York State Senator Darrel Aubertine): I thank you very much. I'd like to say I'm Lee Willbanks, I'm here as the Legislative Director for New York State Senator Darrel Aubertine.

I have an aside before I read his comments to you. The Senator is not new to his fight. I hear many familiar voices and see a lot of familiar faces. It's a fight he's been with from the beginning, he'll be with it to the end, and I think he trusts the Commission will follow the science and follow the people and do the right thing. And now, if I may, I'll just read his comments, please.

I'd like to thank the International Joint Commission for holding these public hearings. It is important that you hear the concerns of all who will be directly impacted by your decision. I'm glad that so many have chosen to speak out in these forums.

Today, I – again, Senator Aubertine – would like to join the residents of this region, my elected colleagues at the village, town, county, state, and federal levels, the business leaders, the environmental groups, and the scientists, who have all spoken out on this issue.

I am here to support Plan B+ as the best of all options to discuss. It is the most environmentally sound, the most economical choice before us today. No other plan comes closer to mimicking the natural state of the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. No other plan would do more to restore wetlands.

No other plan does more to maximize hydro power generation for both the New York Power Authority and Hydro-Québec. No other plan does more to aid commercial shipping and recreational boating with consistent water levels throughout the summer.

In 1997, the IJC proposed Plan 1998. It represented little or no change from the status quo and it was rejected for lack of scientific merit. The United States and Canada then spent \$20 million in five years conducting a study that resulted in three options, the best of which was Plan B+.

However, today we hear that Plan 2007 has emerged as the front-runner, and once again the plan put forth has little scientific merit and shows little or no departure from the status quo.

Under Plan 2007, water levels in November would drop even further below (inaudible) levels in the current 1958DD, and each month the water level would be lower than in Plan B+. That is unacceptable.

Plan B+ is the option that best maintains water levels so that commercial ships and recreational boats have the best opportunity to navigate the Saint Lawrence and Lake Ontario, while also benefiting our environment by restoring the wetlands.

It seems as though the plan that would benefit so many interests – the environment, shipping, boating, energy, and tourism – has been set aside because of concerns regarding property owners on the southwestern shoreline of Lake Ontario.

However, it is important to note that at the request of the IJC, as we've heard tonight, that New York State, through its Department of Environmental Conservation, has already begun working on and is willing to continue working

on a management plan to deal with any adverse effects of Plan B+ and to enhance those impacts where they can.

No matter which question you ask – what plan is best for the environment, what plan is best for recreational boating and tourism, what plan best reduces shore erosion on the upper river, what plan benefits hydro power the most, or what plan is the best for commercial navigation, and then finally, which benefits the vast majority of stakeholders – the answer is B+.

I urge you to accept B+ as the best option. B+ provides the greatest benefits to the environment for the greatest number of people. Please do not stall any longer. Implement B+. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Lee. Karl McKinnon...

SAM SPECK: I have a (inaudible)...

IRENE BROOKS: I'll get into that. Just a minute, we need you back here, Lee, please. Sorry. Was that you, Sam?

SAM SPECK: Right. And don't read what my views may be, because as a relative new member, I am still at work trying to learn as much as I can about this.

But I was interested in your testimony that you indicated that this would be particularly good, B+, for shipping, and testimony that we've had in other locations where shippers have publicly appeared did not seem to coincide with that interpretation. And consequently, I am interested in any additional information you can provide.

LEE WILLBANKS: Well, we're not here to amplify the testimony. We're trying to highlight what you've heard. As far as the shipping goes, again, from what we've been able to understand, there's been work to deal with the problems in the Port of Montreal that would result in ameliorating the concerns that the shipping has raised in some of the regions of the Saint Lawrence River.

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you.

LEE WILLBANKS: Thanks.

IRENE BROOKS: Karl McKinnon, followed by Mary Taylor. Karl? Here you come.

KARL MCKINNON: I want to thank you very much for coming here and meeting with us and, most importantly, hearing necessarily our points of view. That is very gracious of you.

I think that everyone who has been before me has been far more eloquent than I ever could hope to be, both from an economic perspective as well as from an ecological perspective.

The gentleman from the DEC, if I may ask a question, did you mean that...was it your position that the Plan B+ would be mutually exclusive from the remediation of the area or not?

IRENE BROOKS: You'll have to come up so we can get your testimony on record. Thank you.

STEVE LAPAN: The Department would support the comprehensive restoration plan in concert with Plan B+. So we want Plan B+ first.

KARL MCKINNON: Thank you very much. I thought that my understanding from the Canadian Chairperson that he suspected those things were mutually exclusive when, in fact...you asked the gentleman previously, he said that in fact, he wasn't supporting B+ because he wanted to remediate the area. In fact, he said no, in concert with that. So I wanted to make that point.

At the same time, I'm a lifelong resident of here. I've lived both above and below the dam. I have seen the negative effects of the low water. I was here before the seaway, long before, unfortunately, and hopefully for a much longer period of time.

However, I've seen...you're the current group of persons on the committee, and it's very gracious of you to be here and to tolerate our comments, whether they be not so gracious comments about your decisions, how is that.

The general observation is that in the past, the committee has been, at best, probably disrespectful and negligent of the ecology, of what's gone on in this area. The fresh water that we have in the Great Lakes cannot be replaced. If you look around the world, this represents a significant portion of the fresh water of the world.

Lake Superior is down something like 15 feet. The Great Lakes is all we have. We have to stop wasting this water and adversely affecting the ecology of the river. The economics thus follow.

I don't know if any of you folks live on the river or not or anywhere in the Great Lakes area, but this has been a travesty. Like I said, we had better conditions prior to the seaway.

And I recall...I want to tell you something. As a kid, I remember the flooding that used to occur, in the spring especially. Flooding couldn't occur...I can't even put a canoe over here, I live on Wellesley, I couldn't put a canoe on part of my property, and the assessment was just raised by 650 per cent.

Prior to this low water thing that you've created here, in terms of draining all the water out at such a rapid rate...I guess I just cannot comprehend what you're necessarily thinking of, as most of the people here are coming from. It's almost beyond us.

At least the current committee seems to be giving some consideration. For that, we do thank you. We just hope you do the right thing, please, and do Plan B+. I thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Karl. You have a question? Karl?

ALLEN OLSON: Not a question, but I...maybe Tom McAuley should talk about how far Superior has dropped. A couple of times tonight, it's been said that Superior is down 15 feet. I don't think that's accurate, but let our experts correct that.

TOM MCAULEY (Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section, International Joint Commission): Is it working?

IRENE BROOKS: No, they'll take care of it...

TOM MCAULEY: Okay. I'm a liaison with the Lake Superior Board of Control. The Commission has 20 boards across the country. And I was up there last week, and of course, we have been following Lake Superior and the upper lakes which have been low for nine to ten years below average, but Lake Superior is about 8 inches below average right now.

So we just wanted to correct that 15-foot figure. It has gone up a bit. Fortunately, there has been more precipitation. Last year, people were up in arms because all of their docks were dry. And of course, Michigan and Huron have also been low for a long time, almost two feet below average.

KARL MCKINNON: Yes, I understand that, it's the Great Lakes in general. I think one of the questions that came up last summer when we were in Clayton, and someone asked the question about, you know, when do we know when we have too much water?

Well, I'm not a physicist, but I guess my common sense response is look out the window, you can see how much is in the river. I mean, is the water level too high or not? I mean, I don't think you have to have a Ph.D. to figure that one out.

And that's my general comment. We seem to have conflicts of interest with either ends of the river with everyone else along the river and other parts of the lake. My God, if they have an issue, let them please attempt to address those issues. Why should the rest of us be suffering?

And more importantly, the ecology. For God's sakes, what are we thinking about here? We're all worried about power that's not going to invade the environment, worried about fossil fuel? Oh my God, ladies and gentlemen, you kill more fish in one afternoon than we could possibly do with any oil spill that would occur on the river.

I mean, you just cannot drop the water level 14 or 15 inches in a period of three weeks and not expect the fish to be pulled off their beds. It's just not possible. Thank you very much. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Karl. Mary Taylor.

MARY TAYLOR: Good evening. I'm a resident of Grindstone Island and I was asked by my brother-in-law Steve Taylor to read this tonight as he is recovering from surgery. He is a year-round resident of the Thousand Islands.

Are we once again addressing a 21st century challenge with a 20th century solution? Are we once again forsaking science for political expediency? Are we once again behind the curve?

So it appears. All of today's science tells us – indeed, warns us – to change course before it's too late. As we have been digging the graves of other species, we have been digging our own, too. If we can't get it right on a relatively benign issue like water levels, how can we expect to solve the really serious problems?

We have an opportunity to make a small difference for the health of the planet and send the message that our environment matters. With this opportunity

comes the ethical responsibility to choose that which will nurture future life. Plan B is a responsible choice. Thank you for your consideration. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Mary. Next is Tim Schwalbe, followed by Aaron Vogel.

TIM SCHWALBE (Thousand Islands Country Club): Good evening. Thank you all on the Commission, for staying and listening to everybody here.

I am one of the few, I guess, tonight that's a business owner. On Wellesley Island, I own the Thousand Islands Country Club, which includes a golf course, marina, villas. I rely on the – as they call them here – the summer people that come up with their boats and stay in the marina, stay in our villas.

And I've had trouble with high and low water. I've had to dredge the marina because people were hitting bottom. I've had to pay for some props. I've had to repair docks. When the water came up early spring, when there was still ice in the marina, it tends to rip the docks apart, so I've had to spend money repairing those.

I've seen the beautiful canals that George Boulton (?) dug in the late 1800s so full of water that bass boats can get in there, and I've seen them so low that you could walk on the bottom. These are great breeding grounds for bass, bullhead, and other fish

And it's just the tremendous fluctuations in the water levels, you know, have not only cost me money, when the water went down last year, there were

people that had to take their boats out of the marina even I dredged, simply because there was just enough water in the marina.

And I beg whoever set the August 15th date for lowering the river...that's about the middle of our season, and we close the middle of October, after the beautiful colours and everybody has come up here and fished and everything else. So August 15th is not the appropriate time to start lowering the water.

There was a gentleman here from a kayaking place that said, you know, he liked seeing bog float down the river. There's a lot of marsh land around Wellesley Island, and over the past number of years, I've seen a lot of it float down the river.

The problem is it doesn't get replaced. If the water comes up too fast in the spring and there's ice in the bog, it rips the bog loose, it goes down the river and that's it. There are a lot of areas around Wellesley that have a lot less marsh now than they did 5, 10, and 15 years ago.

So again, it's the timing on the water, it's the tremendous fluctuations that cause business owners problems. When people can't get into my marina to come and play golf or come and have dinner or stay for the summer, I'm in trouble. I thank you for your time. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thanks, Tim. Aaron Vogel, followed by James Cameron. Aaron Vogel?

AARON VOGEL (Executive Director, Thousand Islands Land Trust): Thank you. My name is Aaron Vogel, I am the Executive Director of the

Thousand Islands Land Trust. The Land Trust works to conserve the region's natural beauty, wildlife habitats, and recreational opportunities in the Thousand Islands.

The Thousand Islands Land Trust board of directors have passed a resolution in support of Plan B+. The Land Trust conserves approximately 8,000 acres in the Thousand Islands region, many are wetlands environments. Plan 2007 puts these places at risk.

It is critical that the IJC heed the advice of so many, that they heed the advice of the people who have dedicated their lives to the system, heed the advice of the professionals who you have asked to study the river's water levels and flows, and to heed the advice of the public who endorsed Plan B+.

The natural values of the Saint Lawrence River have been ignored too long and have suffered too much. Plan 2007 continues to ignore these needs and the river's natural values and the needs of the communities.

To illustrate the cost of the destruction of the wetlands, the tens of thousands of acres of wetlands you have heard spoken of tonight, I'd like to quantify the costs that we've incurred restoring 100 acres.

We own a 100-acre wetland on Grindstone Island, and about three years ago embarked on a mission to restore that system with partners. It's called Delaney Bay Marsh, and we've, to date, expended about \$400,000.

Approximately \$100,000 of that was just to stabilize the water levels within the system in order to have the habitats stabilized for spawning and other

species. About \$300,000 of that was to ensure that we could do that, by acquiring the property or acquiring the development rights of that property or the properties surrounding it and protecting it from incompatible development.

In addition to the dollars, we've spent countless hours and the countless hours of partners like (inaudible)...of the Thousand Islands Biological Station, Ducks Unlimited, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, as well as others, and all of this to restore the critical habitat on 100 acres of wetlands that have been damaged by the current water levels plan.

We ask that you recognize how a healthy river system with a healthy wetlands and habitats supports a healthy community and a healthy economy. We ask that you abandon Plan 2007 and place a high priority on our environment. Please adopt B+ and respect the natural systems and the natural rhythms of this great river. Thank you. (APPLAUSE)

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you very much. Any questions? James Cameron.

JAMES CAMERON: My name is Jim Cameron. I live down here on Goose Bay during the summertime. And I don't really have a statement to make, but I have a couple of questions that I'd like to ask if I could.

I understand from reading the documents that there are approximately six or seven major stakeholders who are interested in what the water level is going to be on Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River, those being boating interests, south shore riparian landowners, shipping, electrical generation, etc. And I know

that you people have to consider and weigh against each other all these six or seven different stakeholders.

Our primary interest here seems to be recreational boating, environment, and probably a little bit of shipping and power generation, and they seem to be at odds against the landowners on the south shore of Lake Ontario.

And for you people, the solution has to be an and and a both. It can't be us against them or somebody else against somebody else. You've got to make the best solution. So my question is how long does it take to lower the level of Lake Ontario to a respectable level so that the south shore owners don't suffer property damage?

I mean, I know that in past years...I've been here for 27 years, and on average, you know, starting about mid-July, the water level is going down, oh, maybe 3-4 inches a week. So by the time we get to Labour Day, we haven't got any water here, but has that significantly dropped the level of Lake Ontario?

So my question is more of a science question, I guess, you know. If we start dropping it September 15th instead of August 15th, can we significantly lower the level enough so that it protects the south shore of Lake Ontario?

IRENE BROOKS: Chair Gray?

HERB GRAY: First of all, I think we should all bear in mind that I speak as a layman, but hopefully an informed one. What we're doing is trying to moderate the effects of Mother Nature with respect to the highs and lows. We are not able to control Mother Nature 100 per cent.

So if you ask - and I'm going to ask Mr. McAuley to supplement what I'm saying - how long does it take to lower Lake Ontario or can we lower Lake Ontario, the ability of the Control Board reporting to the IJC through the Moses-Saunders dam is limited by the overall impacts of Mother Nature and what's going on through the entire basin.

But I'd like Mr. McAuley, as we come to the conclusion of this very interesting meeting, to make a comment. If he wants to contradict me, his job will not be in peril. (LAUGHS)

TOM MCAULEY: Mr. Cameron, there's two parts to the answer. The first one, very simply, at the dam, if you increase the flow at the dam by (inaudible) per cent, which is about 700 cubic metres per second, in the course of one week, you lower Lake Ontario by two centimetres, which is a little shy of an inch, three-quarters of an inch.

But that's just a minor technical fact. And as Commissioner Gray mentioned, all the supplies that come from Mother Nature, all the water down from the upper Great Lakes down to the Niagara, plus the basin of Lake Ontario, very enormously, over time...and in the study that we have mentioned, which the Commission has not trashed but has based everything upon this study, we looked at those supplies not only for the historic century, but for many, many centuries.

One lady here talked about a 20th century solution to a 21st century problem. Well, we had to look at also the 21st century and climate change

scenarios and what kind of water levels and supplies might be coming in the 2050s.

And all four scenarios, when we looked at all of the work that had ever been done on the Great Lakes, showed less water going down the river, between 4 per cent and 24 per cent less flow on an annual basis.

I just want to mention that we have learned some additional benefits of B+, and I think we should look also at time scales as well. Some people realize that B+ produces benefits for recreational boating. On average, it does give higher levels in the late summer and fall, it also gives higher levels in the spring.

But if you look at a whole century – and we showed the spaghetti graph here at the information session – there are years...and this is where it gets us environmental benefits for the wetlands, a lot of those lower levels, which benefit the wetlands, I am hoping that those that might have believed that B+ would be better during lower years for recreational boating, there will be some hard years. On average, it might be somewhere between two and four years out of ten where they'll say we've got no water to get our boats in and out of the marinas.

So I just wanted to make sure that nobody has that wrong impression. And of course, at that time, it will still be benefiting, of course, the wetlands and the environment.

IRENE BROOKS: Thank you, Tom.

JAMES CAMERON: Okay, thank you.

IRENE BROOKS: Well, that concludes our list of those who registered to speak. Let me thank you for attending this meeting and providing us with your views.

We will continue to accept comments through July 11th and will make our decision only after considering all comments and in consultation with the two national governments, whose concurrence we will seek on a final order and plan.

As mentioned earlier, our staff here will remain after the meeting for any informational...any more information, questions that you would have.

We will transcribe the records from all ten hearings and they will appear on our website, which is ijc.org, if you are interesting in seeing not only tonight's, but all the other hearings that we have conducted.

So thank you again for coming and drive safe.
