

TO: INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION ON THE GREAT LAKES  
FROM: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/ROCHESTER METROPOLITAN AREA  
RE: LAKE ONTARIO WATER LEVELS MANAGEMENT PLANS  
DATE: June 11, 2008

My name is Ann Jones. I represent the League of Women Voters, Rochester Metropolitan Area.

The League of Women Voters has for many years supported actions that protect the health of wetlands. The Lake Ontario coastal wetlands perform two important functions. They provide essential breeding and early life habitat for many species of fish and birds. In this way they are an essential part of the food web of our region. The health and numbers of fish are important to sport fishermen, who often do not realize their catch may have been "born" in a wetland. Wetlands also remove chemicals of concern from run-off. In this way they are an essential player in keeping the Lake's water clean. A healthy wetland experiences changes in water levels through the year.

Because it does a reasonable job of supporting the health of wetlands, the League strongly supports Plan B+.

However, we are not here to discuss Plan B+. We are here to comment on Plan 2007. This plan does not do as much to protect wetlands as does Plan B+. There being no choice, we support Plan 2007, but with a caveat. We support Plan 2007, IF and only IF, Plan 2007 is reviewed within two years of implementation. At that time Plan B+ will be reconsidered. Our wish is that during the 2 years of implementation, local, State and Federal funding will help shorefront owners mitigate erosion using rock barriers or other physical methods.

All stake-holders in this effort must realize that erosion is a natural phenomenon. Some erosion will continue regardless of human efforts to stop it. In short, the League of Women Voters supports Plan 2007 with the stipulation that it will be reviewed at the end of two years, at which time, Plan B+ will be reconsidered.

Thank you for holding this hearing.

Ann W. Jones

Rochester, NY