



Presentation to the IJC

June 26, 2008

Oswego, NY

My name is Ann Hayslip. I am a resident of Sodus Point, NY and tonight I am representing Save Our Sodus (or SOS). SOS is a 500 member grass roots organization established in 1999. Our mission is to improve, protect and preserve water quality in the Sodus Bay watershed

Members of SOS include waterfront property owners, business owners, fishermen and women, boaters, and visitors to the Bay. We share one thing in common: we all love Sodus Bay and Lake Ontario and devote our energy and dollars to protecting it for future generations to enjoy.

The members of SOS are dedicated to protecting and improving the environment. Among our many projects, we work each summer to hand pull invasive weed species and to pick up trash from our shoreline.

As a measure of our commitment to the local environment, our organization earned a federal EPA Environmental Quality award in 2006.

I mention the credentials of SOS in order to demonstrate that, unlike some presenters to this panel, SOS members are environmentalists AS WELL AS concerned property owners and frequent users of the water. We strive to improve the health of the Bay, protect our shoreline, and assure public access to the water. We believe it is possible to strike a balance between the needs of the natural AND the human environments. In doing so, we acknowledge the crucial role our Bay plays in the economic health of our region of New York State.

It is, therefore, the position of SOS that Plan 2007 comes closest to achieving the best outcome for property owners, recreational users of the water, AND the environment of the south shore. We support Plan 2007, but we believe some improvements can be made.

We urge the Commissioners to amend Plan 2007 to include criteria g, h, and k from the existing criteria. We believe that better balance can be achieved if the lake levels continue to be regulated for the protection of the shoreline, if upper and lower water level limits are included, and if all possible relief of riparian owners is provided in the event of flooding. To cite the Commission's own guidelines, "Criteria and regulation plans....will not result in disproportionate loss to any particular interest or geographic area". We believe that amending Plan 2007 in the manner suggested greatly improves the ability to avoid disproportionate loss to the southern shore of the Lake and its bays.

In conclusion, we have only to look at recent news reports of tragic tornadoes and the floods along the Mississippi River to know that Mother Nature herself can create “disproportionate” and disastrous loss. These natural events are often unavoidable. But, in the case Lake Ontario, extreme events CAN be anticipated and managed. It is disturbing to think that the Commission might choose a path that tempts disaster.

On behalf of Save Our Sodus and everyone who lives near and loves Sodus Bay and Lake Ontario, I urge the Commissioners to adopt Plan 2007 with modifications; and, in doing so, to acknowledge the sensitive balancing act needed to protect all interests.

I thank you for your time and trust that your final decision will achieve the desired balance.

Presenter: Ann M. Hayslip, Immediate Past President
Save Our Sodus, Inc. (SOS)

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