IJC – Review of the Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Order of Approval
June 26, 2008,

Greetings:

I want to thank the IJC for traveling around Lake Ontario, having earlier information sessions and these public hearings. I feel that today's public is a much more informed public because of the Internet, as well as the media, and also the variety of environmental and science courses offered at all the colleges, universities, and secondary schools. Books and magazines, not just scientific and peer review magazine, are keeping the public aware of the changes and affects of water, pollution, and energy around the world. We are all beginning to know anthropogenic change is induced by action of mankind.

The Great Lakes is considered one of America's great northern coastline; and just as the oceans have tides that varies the east, west and southern shorelines, causing a variety of plants, fish and other wild life; why shouldn't this northern coastline flux such as other multicultural wetlands should? We've read many opinions on the water management plan and decided we agree with Plan B+, which the Nature Conservancy's Executive Director, Jim Howe, believes is the best option. I'm aware of the monoculture wetlands and the worries there. I believe this plan will help direct that problem but also be acceptable to the business community.

The IJC needs to stay strong on no diversions of our fresh water out of the watershed basin. We don't need to make the mistake of allowing any more diversions of fresh water away from the Great Lakes. We can look to other areas for examples of what happens when water is diverted for drinking or agribusiness:

1) The Aral Sea, in the former Soviet Union, where massive amounts of water were taken for the cotton crop. From 1957 to 2001, the area of the lake has gone from 66,900 km2 to 24,200 km2, volume of water from 1,090 km3 to 175 km3, and the salinity has concentrated 700%. The photo of the fishing fleet boats lying on their sides on the sand bottom is memorable.

2) Lake Mead was built on the Colorado River. From 1903 – 34 the Colorado River averaged 22,0000 cfs. It was built with dams to control the water for agriculture, hydropower, and drinking water. After the dams were constructed the flow averaged 4,000 cfs. Today, Lake Mead's depth has dropped so far it has a deep Bath Tub Ring around it. On March 18, 2008, the Colorado River ran at 700 cfs, while Oswego River was 17,200 cfs.

3) Mono Lake, CA – at the Basin of the Range of Western U.S., the volume decreased by 50%, before the citizens in 1994 stepped in and stopped the diversion of all the snow melt and rain to the big cities west of the mountains.

4) Owens Lake, CA – south of Mono Lake, was hydrographically closed by diversion of all its input waters. It is now called Owens Valley.

5) Lake Chad, Africa, shared unsuccessfully by four countries, Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria. If you look on Goggle Earth you can see it at its shrunken size. It's a very shallow lake, 7 m deepest, but has 20 million people around it. They even have a type of farming called Recessional agriculture, where they plant in the lakebed as it seasonally recedes.

6) Lake Biwa, a sacred lake in Japan, had rapid eutrophication during the 1960s, and they have been working at cleaning it up ever since.

There are many other great lakes throughout the world, but the amount of fresh water is limited. Wars have been and are being fought over fresh water. Diversion of water is not an option. People must go to where the clean, fresh water is, not vice versa.

Nowhere else have two different countries, like Canada and the United States, so successfully worked together to control and use jointly their fresh water. You're to be commended for you work.

Thank you.

June S. and Phil MacArthur

Oswego, NY