

The Panel on the Future of the Trent Severn Waterway:  
185 King Street, Suite 100  
Peterborough, ON  
K9J 2R8

I would like to submit the following comments on the future of the Trent Severn Canal system. I am a person who does not own a boat but has rented on 5 occasions larger vessels on the Rideau – Trent Severn System. Furthermore, I am not connected to the tourist industry or Parks Canada.

The Trent Severn waterway should be maintained as a continues operating canal system because of its historical value, its value to the tourist industry, it provides local parks at each lock, and of its benefit of regulating water levels in a number of lakes. These benefits cross a number of spheres which can not be taxed directly (user fees) and therefore much of the operating cost should be funded from general taxes. It would not be unreasonable to expect the Province of Ontario to pay 10% of the cost because of the water control component of the system.

From an operating viewpoint, I submit the running cost could be lowered by scheduling staff in overlapping shifts. So that in slow periods only one person is working on a given lock. For example one person starts at 7:30 o'clock and works to 15:30 while the second one works from 10:30 to 18:30. This would not increase the cost but would extend hours of operation and attract more business. I do not subscribe to the idea that 2 people have to be at the lock at all times for safety reasons. The canals in Wales operate without lock crews.

For improved utilization it would be desirable to generate more rental vessels on the system along the line of historical cruisers. If private industry can not be persuaded to build and operate such a business than the Federal Government should look at starting on of these. Something along the line of the “narrow boats” in Wales and England but with a Canadian flavour.



Konrad Brenner