

To: Ken East  
TSW Panel

From: Don Richardson

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I have been cottaging in this area on the Trent for over 40 years. About 6 years ago my wife and I took a vacation in British Columbia and rented a boat with a couple in Vancouver. We took a boat trip up through the Georgia Strait and into Desolation Sound. During this trip I was struck by the success that they have had in recognizing and reconciling the commercial, residential, recreational and environmental interests in this area. There are lots of marine parks where one can tie up a boat and overnight, and take advantage of the water and the land. There are lots of marinas with reliable and dependable gas and diesel, pump outs and a full range of supplies and provisions.

In this part of B.C., there's lots of commerce on the water mostly in the form of transportation and commercial fishing. And there are lots of small communities and isolated homes/seasonal dwellings.

On our trip, we stopped at a number of these marine parks and were able to swim and explore on the land and generally enjoy the water, scenery and the environment. We made ample use of the marinas and their facilities and generally had a great time.

I was struck at the time at the difference between this experience and my own experience and my observations of the experiences of others on the Trent Severn Waterway.

Much of the land and islands here have No Trespassing signs. Most of the boat traffic that I observe using the canal seems to be focused on getting someplace – perhaps the next lock, perhaps a certain distance per day. I observe little of the “let's stop here for a swim, an exploration, an overnight...” What a missed opportunity to enjoy and take advantage of valuable, accessible and enjoyable public, and in some cases private, space.

While I don't mean to suggest that this part of B.C. and the Pacific and the Trent Severn Waterway are the same, I do mean to suggest that if we on the Trent could create an atmosphere that was more like theirs, “our” waterway would be better used, supported, appreciated and valued than it is today. We could have a better balance of commercial, residential, recreational and environmental interests; and a healthier, more vibrant Waterway.