

## The Future of the Trent Severn Waterway

Presented to the Panel on August 8, 2007.

My name is Doug Sinclair, and today I represent two groups. The Lock 42 and area rate payers association and The Canadian Boaters Alliance, a 23,000-member boaters group. I have lived on the Severn River since 1981 and had a cottage on the Severn River since 1976. My family has boated the Trent Severn Waterway since 1984. As a representative of the Lock 42 and area ratepayers association, we have two main issues:

1. Lock times, lock times, lock times. Everyone I know is extremely frustrated with the limited hours the locks are open.
2. Spring flooding. I understand being concerned about not flooding the people in the south end of Lake Simcoe, but why flood us out on the Severn River draining Lake Simcoe in the spring. It's great to watch \$500.00 worth of grass seed float down the river.

As the speaker before me said Hydro Glen should be widened so excess flow can drain the Severn River and Lake Simcoe. I can stand here and complain all day but I feel the most important thing I can do is point out the monies generated by the TSWW that can be used to fix the TSWW.

First I contacted the Ontario Marina Owners Association and was informed that about 24 million dollars in GST is collected by the member marinas from Lock 1 to Lock 45 now I must warn you that these numbers are at least 6 years old. I then contacted the CMMA and they indicated to me that about 12 million dollars a year in GST is collected in Ontario and a large portion of the 12 million is directly from the TSWW. I then contacted Canadian Tire, who respectfully declined to tell me how much GST they collect for marine sales. I understand why they would hesitate however that hesitation tells me as a business owner that they sell a LARGE quantity of marine products and don't want their competition to know. The same applies to West Marine, Bass Pro Shop, numerous restaurants, bars and resorts.

Further to this I contacted a few marinas and calculated the amount of fuel per year used by the boats on the TSWW and we are looking at more than 10 million dollars in fuel tax. To conclude, I suggest that the TSWW generates a huge amount of GST and fuel tax. A detailed study will probably find in excess of \$100,000,000.00. At this point I say it's a funding slam-dunk.

The next issue I'd like to talk about is **competition**; the TSWW has a tremendous amount of competition from both south of the border and the Welland Canal.

1. Let's start first with the New York State Erie Canal system, I would like to quote from the New York State Erie Canal system website "Please note: In an effort to draw more tourists and vacationers to the 524-mile waterway, the Canal Corporation Board has voted to waive recreational boating tolls for the 2007

navigation season” ([www.nyscanals.gov/exvac/boating/bctolls.html](http://www.nyscanals.gov/exvac/boating/bctolls.html)). A boater sitting in Lake Ontario on July can make a choice; he can turn north and wait until 8:30 a.m. and only be able to use the system until 7:00 p.m. and pay a large sum of money for a lock pass or he can turn south and go through a 6:30 a.m. and be able to use the system until 11:30 p.m. for free, not a tough decision.

2. The Welland Canal accommodates the passage of over 2000 pleasure craft per year. Let’s look at this through the eyes of a looper, he can enter the TSWW at Trenton still having to wait until 8:30 a.m. and must be finished by 7:00 p.m. or he can go through the Welland Canal 24-7, and to top it off the Welland Canal will probably be cheaper at \$25.00 per lock, a total of \$200.00. The biggest concern I have about “loopers” using the Welland Canal is that they probably go directly to US waters to take advantage of lower fuel costs and lower beverage costs upon leaving the canal. When these same “loopers” go through the TSWW we have the opportunity to supply them with goods and services to collect even more GST/fuel tax.

The last issue is locking larger fly bridge boats, the effect of wind on larger boats going through locks is dangerous and difficult to handle. Planting trees in strategic locations and building windbreaks would be a huge help. All lockmasters should have a VHF radio like the Erie Canal system and the Welland Canal. The canal should be dredged in shallow areas and the rock under the Highway 400 Bridge should be removed. Last but not least several US boaters have told me that the removal of aids to navigation has scared them off from using the TSWW.

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to present my concerns and findings to you.