

Presentation to the Trent Severn

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John Doomernik
The Homestead Trailer Park Ltd
President

My name is John Doomernik. My wife and I own the Homestead Trailer Park on Eels Lake. It is the second most drawn down lake on the system losing approximately 7ft to 9ft annually.

I am not here to repeat what you've already heard about the environmental effects on the draw down of reservoir lakes (I'm sure that all the previous reservoir lake stake holders have mentioned the environmental and navigational concerns). **I'm here to talk about some of the causes and solutions.**

When designed and built in the 19th century for commercial endeavors, the original designers of the waterway could not have foreseen the additional support required for the shoreline development that has since taken place.

1-Cities and towns: In their hunger for commercial economic development and population expansion into the tens of thousands, an additional strain has been created on the TSW and their reservoir lakes.

Few people realize that the level of the system is artificially maintained. To quote a City of Peterborough web site, "Peterborough is fortunate to have a plentiful supply of source water from the Otonabee River." It is assumed that there's an unlimited supply of water, because the maximum fluxuation on the Otonabee River is 6 inches (thanks to the contribution of reservoir lakes).

2-The upgrading of cottages: to year round residence has severely overburdened the water supply. A good portion of residents, instead of drilling a well, obtain their water from the canal. Canal water is also used for lawn maintenance.

3-The production of hydro electric power: was not necessarily included in the design of the TSW.

Trent University wants to add a hydro electric dam on their property. The Member of Parliament for North Simcoe has also put forward a private members bill stating, among other things, that "the TSW has, at present, eighteen hydro-electric generating facilities with potential to produce up to 50% more hydro-electric power from a renewable source with no environmental impact." Has he or Trent University considered the environmental impact on reservoir lakes? How much more water would be drawn from reservoir lakes for this purpose?

4-The Ministry of the Environment: regularly issues water taking permits for commercial, industrial and agricultural use. These permits are good for TEN YEARS. What safeguards are in place to prevent misuse of these permits?

5-The inefficient use of locks: On week days, during the shoulder seasons, a lock operator will lower or raise one boat. Can the shoulder seasons be shortened?

6-Poor dam maintenance and management: One of our dams is in such disrepair that thousands of gallons of water pass needlessly through it.

In the summer of 2006, Eels Lake was down 6ft by Labour Day. When questioned, the reply was that dam repairs were required. This work was not started until November. Our water was taken in anticipation of repairs to be done 3 months later. Both of our dams needed repairs, yet only one was done. We will have to go through another summer of low water due to inefficiencies. This spring, Eels Lake was 20 inches below the high water mark because of the above inefficiencies and a mild winter.

Standard practice on Eels Lake is to pull only one twelve inch stop log at a time. Three logs were pulled June 21/07. By July 1/07 we were down 30 inches. On Aug. 14/07, five stop logs were removed at one time. The water level dropped 26 inches in eight days. By Labour Day it was down 67 inches.

Pulling five logs at one time caused erosion and habitat damage to the banks of Eels Creek. How many other areas have been affected by wasted water overflowing the banks?

In an age where global warming and conservation are primary international concerns, why are we not looking first in our own backyard? It's time to move the system into the 21st century. There are many engineering solutions to keep all stake holders happy. Some of which I propose as follows:

1-Reuse the water in the locks: instead of dumping the water into the lower lake, dump it into a reservoir to be pumped back into the lock.

The reservoir can be designed to also collect water from other sources- rain water, recycled municipal waste water, storm sewer water etc.

2-Wells: All stake holders, including reservoir lakes, should be on wells. The days of unlimited free water must be phased out. Users should be given a time frame to obtain water from other sources, or pay for TSW water.

3-Proper dam maintenance: would help in conserving water. Would 6in logs, instead of 12in logs, be more efficient? A lake does not have to drop a foot every time a log is pulled.

Start draw down for repair work on dams after Labour Day, when it affects the least amount of people.

4-Stop equal percentage of drawdown on reservoir lakes according to storage capacity. Maximum drawdown limits need to be re-evaluated. To expect any lake to drop 8 to 12ft is unreasonable. Pulling five stop logs at one time is unreasonable and excessive.

5-Educate the public: TSW water is a precious resource and needs to be conserved and paid for.

6-Moratorium on expansion of hydro electric water: A complete study must be done to determine how much water is actually needed and available before we arbitrarily expand on the current generating system.

Some of the ways to pay for engineered solutions could be to:

- 1-Increase user pay, for all boats
- 2-Boat ramp fees
- 3-Revenue from the collection of fuel taxes used specifically for recreational boating
- 4-GST and PST tax revenue generated from TSW tourism
- 5-Fee on all properties, in the form of lot licenses or dock license.
- 6-All commercial and domestic stake holders, not on wells, need to pay for that water or drill a well. When something is free it is often abused. This will also help with conservation.

I knowingly bought on a reservoir lake. When we purchased the Homestead Trailer Park the average drawn down for the previous five years (as of September 1) was 42 inches. If it was still 42 inches, I wouldn't be here today. I'm here because the draw down in 2005, was 62 inches, in 2006- 70 inches, in 2007- 67 inches. It went from 42 inches to an average of 66 inches. What will the draw down be in the next ten years if something isn't done? Reservoir lakes should not be expected to make up all the extra water required to satisfy all the stake holders on the Trent Severn Waterway. My understanding is, that the TSW has legal and historical right to take as much water from reservoir lakes as it needs to operate the lock system, however, do all other stake holders have the same right. Some of these stake holders need to get their water from other sources. We don't have an endless supply of water. Additional water consumption for domestic and commercial use must stop in order for the TSW and their reservoir lakes to operate in the manner for which they were designed. My question to this panel is this. Other than the operation of the lock system, do all the other stake holders have a right to unlimited water from reservoir lakes?