

Tony Kenny

September 13, 2007

Panel on the future of the Trent-Severn Waterway
185 King St. Unit 100
Peterborough, ON K9J 2R8

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am pleased to take the opportunity to comment on the Trent-Severn Waterway.

My credentials:

- Tourism owner/operator of Rainbow Cottages Resort on the Otonabee River at Rice Lake (since 1987)
- 33 acres of my farm was flooded to create the waterway in the very early 1900's
- I have participated as a Board Member on the Committee for the Nomination of the Trent-Severn Waterway as a Canadian Heritage River (1996)
- I have participated as a Member on the Review Committee for the Trent-Severn Waterway Waterlot Leasing Proposal hosted by the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce (1996)
- I have served as:
 - Councilor for the Township of South Monaghan
 - Board member on the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority
 - Board member of Resorts Ontario (a provincial organization representing resort owners across the province)
 - Committee member of Motels Ontario
 - Committee member of the Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters
 - Founding member of the Tourism Federation of Ontario
 - Board member of Peterborough & the Kawartha Tourism & Convention Bureau
 - Board member of the Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce
 - Chair of the Central Ontario Tourism Association
 - Chair of the Peterborough County Stewardship Council
 - Board member of the Kawartha Fisheries Association (KFA), founding member of the Rice Lake Chapter of the KFA
 - Provincial Board member and Zone E Chair of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- I am currently:

- Vice-Chair of the Peterborough County Landowners Association
- Board member of the South Central Region Advisory Committee to the Ministry of Natural Resources

My Concerns:

Environment:

- In the past, the construction of the canal caused extreme environmental damage by flooding wetlands, introducing many invasive species and eroding shorelines of properties.
- Due to the operation of the TSW the invasive species known today include zebra mussels, spiny river flea, eurasian milfoil, river ruffe, crappie, pike and rusty crayfish (and many more); each causing both environmental and economic hardship and losses.
- Future invasives include flying carp, big-head carp, sea lamprey and green crab. These future invasives are poised to destroy the fishery of the inland waterway; the flying carp additionally discourage boating use of any kind.
- What plan will be established to stop these invasives from entering the interior waterway?
- The environmental damage by boat wakes needs to be addressed via a maximum wake height restriction.
- Shoreline erosion caused by high water, fast water and boat wake needs to be compensated to the landowners that suffer from the impacts.
- The lower Otonabee marsh complexes – of class one provincial significance - were protected by a strip of land which was created by dredging to create the waterway in the 1900's. This protective strip of land is disappearing at an alarmingly rapid rate. Once this protection is gone, the marsh complexes will be completely subjected to boat wakes and natural erosions, these actions will then eliminate the marshes and all the habitat therein. Examples of the disappearance of these marshes can be seen at the marshes south of Campbeltown, south of Rainbow Cottage Resort and at the mouth of the Otonabee at Rice Lake.
- A timely, co-ordinated, multi-level government plan to deal with future catastrophes such as this summer's die off of carp needs to be created.
- Sewage treatment plants must be recognized as a point source of contamination of surface water (the Peterborough sewage treatment plant was identified in the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan of 1990).
- Water levels at the dam sites in the spring need to be maintained for the benefit of the fisheries resource to enable fish (especially walleye/pickrel) to spawn successfully.
- Flooded private property was never purchased by the Crown in 1908. The Landowners movement holds as a main tenet that landowner rights are paramount and that any intrusion by government for public benefit must be compensated in a just, fair and timely manner. So far, the TSW and the Federal Government have failed in recognition of individual rights and compensation. The Panel must therefore strongly reaffirm and recognize the private ownership of flooded property to the TSW management, Parks Canada and the government.

Operations:

- Deteriorating dams and locks are of course a public safety issue and I hope that since the identification of this liability more than 20 years ago, the TSW has plans to address these faulty and failing structures.
- With continued drought and near-drought conditions, the feeder lakes are drawn down to almost dry levels, effecting fisheries, navigation, water quality and ultimately the users of the TSW.
- Extreme weather events are now more common, timely response and operation of the waterway is critical to controlling water levels and minimizing flooding events.
- Modernization (the automation of locks) of the majority of locks would have long term savings to the overall operation of the TSW, while realizing that certain locks would be maintained in a period setting to retain the authenticity of the experience.
- Further waterfront restrictions on private properties including building setbacks, arbitrary designations of vegetative materials, and a new species at risk program for a 5-km setback from the Waterway are completely outside the jurisdiction of the TSW and continue to negatively affect property rights.
- Rest assured, however that the TSW should maintain responsibility and management of properties held in ownership by the TSW.

Funding:

- In 1996, the waterlot leasing proposal met with organized, articulate and strong opposition; indeed all subsequent reincarnations of this proposal have met with similar opposition. It is obvious that the solution to the ongoing financial support of the TSW lies in avenues far away from the waterfront businesses.
- The TSW has seen a decrease in use by boaters. This fact has two derivatives:
 - i. The lack of use by boaters of the TSW has a direct effect on the businesses along the waterway; there are fewer sales in stores and restaurants, fewer sales of fuel and fewer nights of short-term docking paid for in marinas.
 - ii. The lack of boaters in the locks directly relates to the lack of land-based visitors to the locks. These land-based visitors are tourists – and the areas' tourism accommodations are suffering directly because the TSW is no longer a tourist attraction.

As tourism has been in steady decline for many years, any revitalization would be of economic benefit to this area.

Sincerely,

Tony Kenny