

I represent a group of cottagers and year-round residents on Deer Bay Reach, part of Lower Buckhorn Lake. I've been coming to the area for 45 years. My father camped and fished there back in the 1930s and 40s when the Whetungs from Curve Lake did some guiding. We both remember a time of fewer weeds.

Deer Bay Reach is separated from the main channel of the Trent Severn by a group of islands. Our bay, a mile or two square and 6 to 10 feet deep, has often been visited by houseboats and fishing boats, but these boats visit less and less often lately. Why? Weeds.

The problem is not just that water plants now grow to the surface of most of the lake. The problem is floating rafts of weeds that have been cut by boat motors, yanked by fishing lines, uprooted by keels, or pulled by frustrated cottagers who can't get out to open water unless they cut weeds. These rafts collect and snag on the tops of weeds that have grown to the surface by about June each year. One group hired a contractor to cut and harvest a couple of summers ago. He burned out two motors, barely made a dent in the weed mass, and left.

Example, floating raft.



Float 1



Float 2



Float 3

Note that weeds reach lake surface by June, rafts start forming then. Without rain to raise the water level, they sit there. By August, they begin to putrefy.



Float 4



Float 5

Float 6



Weeds all the way from the fishing boat to the shore. So how can you fish? This used to be a good fishing spot.



Float 7

I mentioned putrefying surface weeds. This used to be another great spot for pickerel, down near Black Duck Dam into Lovesick.

Some weeds do manage to come loose and float in to shore.

How they look close to a neighbour's shore.
Too bad he was away for a couple of days.



Neighbour shore

How we spend our summer holidays. This is one day's work.



Raking 1



raking 2

I believe you've already heard a lot about the growing weed problem, which is rampant on many lakes. One fisherman approached my canoe recently, obviously new to the area. "This is disgusting" he said, and turned around and left. Will he come back to this area? Doubtful.

Already we notice far fewer fishing boats than in years past. Fewer campers on the point. Fewer houseboats in quiet bays, probably because they can't get through the weeds into those bays any more. Meanwhile residents and cottagers like us along the Trent system want help to deal with the problem, but we're not getting it.

I believe you want solutions, not just problems. So I'll suggest a few.

- First, the Trent Severn organization, a public agency, needs to be much better at providing information and advice for people who want to improve water quality and reduce weeds where they live. Currently we find that officials are unhelpful, disinterested, obstructive, and sometimes arrogant. People applying for permits wait months. Others give up and cut weeds or lay sand on the lake bottom without permission, so their children will at least have a place to swim.
- Second, improve the web site. It's useless if you're looking for information on environmentally friendly weed control, or any weed control! I'm not interested in chemical treatments. What *is* reasonable and acceptable?

- Third, pay attention to the hard work being done by the Kawartha Lake Stewards Association, representing various groups on more than a dozen lakes who are concerned increasing phosphorus and resultant water plant growth. I appreciate that the Trent Severn waterway is a supporter of the Kawartha Lake Stewards. Please *act* on the information they gather about what is causing the big increase in nutrients in the Kawartha Lakes, which in turn feeds macrophytes and algae.
- Fourth, find a way to ensure that boaters using the system, including campers and houseboat renters, will never dump human waste or dishwater overboard. We've seen evidence that some do: it's one more way to feed the weeds. Boaters are only passing through, while we live with the consequences.
- Fifth (and this may be a little hairbrained), I'm wondering how hard it would be to raise the water level in our area just an inch or two for a few hours every few weeks during dry weather. It might help un snag those floating weed rafts from the growing weeds below, allowing them to float into shore so that we can rake them out, rather than watch them putrefy all summer. I asked someone in the Trent Severn Peterborough office about this idea of raising the level briefly. He said it would only take a few hours, but it would *upset boaters*, so it's not something he'd do. He didn't seem to have any concept of the weed problem I was talking about. Boaters come and go. What about those who leave here?
- Finally, what individuals cannot do, municipalities and government agencies can. Lake planning, rigid application of regulations for septic systems, and strict rules and education for boaters may help reduce phosphorus and weed growth. Please use all authority that you have to act quickly and push for all initiatives that will improve and protect our lake system from weed invasion.

I do thank you for holding these hearings. It's a welcome opportunity for many groups and issues to be heard, all with what is really a common goal.

We love our cottage area on the Trent Severn. We want to preserve it for future generations. Please help us to make that happen, for boaters, for cottagers, for residents, for our grandchildren, for everyone.



















