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To: <info@tswpanel.ca>
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Subject: Boater Opinion

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To The Panel on the Future of the Trent-Severn Waterway
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Thank you, thank you, thank you, finally I hope something and someone is going to help or at least make an effort to help save our dying Canadian Historic Recreational Destination that spans from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay.

Home port for us is a trailer park on Balsam lake. We have been boating on the system since the 80's and have watched things go down hill steadily, and we sure have covered it well. In fact one summer we done 180 plus locks in less than a three week holiday. Left Balsam Lk., covered the locks to Trenton, thru the Rideau Canal to Ottawa, back to Trenton then onto Balsam to pick up a passenger and continued to Georgian Bay to Parry Sound and then back to Balsam Lake, what a trip. Year after year we have travelled the TSW & Rideau Canal with so many destinations to see and visit I can't get over how very few people back home know nothing about our 'Wonder of the World' attraction and that there are only three hydraulic lift locks in the world and we have two of them on our Trent Severn Waterway and the many locks that are still manually turned by our lockmen. No wonder they have such fantastic calves on them. It's sad to think so many people are missing out on this part of Canada's history and WHY?

I believe its lack of advertising /marketing, - when was the last time you seen a billboard or an ad on tv for the TSW

As a boater I feel blessed we've had the opportunity to learn the history of the TSW. In years gone by we have met up with other boaters from all over and to this day we still exchange christmas cards with alot of them from Quebec, Florida, California, N.C. and Michigan. To help us also learn the history were our lock masters and canal men, without them there'd be no safe passage or history. It bothers us and scares us to think alot of these good men will retire and will be no more.

Thanks to the Lock Master who let us know about this panel and the meetings and encouraged us to write in, otherwise we would still be in the dark about anything going on. We in turn have let some of our boater friends know so they too can participate or at least read the website. I feel the boaters play a very big part in this and should have known of the meetings And I'd like to ask why we didn't? I know that that transient boaters are the ones that pay on the TSW for lockage and for mooring and I don't know of anyone else that does, so I do feel I could say a few things of where things could improve from a boaters view.

1. Why did you have to go over seas to viist Ireland, British Waterways, etc,etc when all you had to do was visit and spend time on the Rideau Canal compare us to them, they seem to be doing very well and also have the money and seem to be doing things right. Pay attention to close in hand. I know even parts of the Erie Canal that have hydro hookup and washrooms with no charge to stay. Someone told us one time that part of there road taxes go to there canals. Which brings me to another soar subject gas/ fuel they sure like to goage us at the pumps on the water and why? This has really slowed the boat traffic this year, alot of our boater friends aren't doing the traveling they use to and I must say we sure aren't any more either. We use to get told at the pumps our fuel tax was going to the waterway , we just don't beleave that one at all.

2. Our Lock Masters and Canal persons: outstanding proffessionals, without them where would we be. As the good men slowly retire I would hope the younger generation can fill there shoes. Hope the funds will be there for ther training so they can become the best of there profession and be a mirror image of the lock master who trained him or her.

2B. The Negative

In the 18 plus years of travelling the TSW we have found the best group of lock masters and canal persons to

be from Peterborough to Port Severn. They are fantastic men and women, smiling, curious, right there to help. Where as from Below Peterborough to Trenton its hard to find a good thing to say (there some good guys but few) hard to get them to smile or even get them to move. About four years back we were approaching a lock and it was quite breezey the lock staff was on the porch with the hands behind the head enjoying the sunshine and after watching us jump off the boat to get our own cables they finally come down off there perch. This person was not in uniform only part of it. We find that they are very lazy, we always appear to be bothering them, shirt tails hanging out looking like slobs and just not friendly. And you don't dare say anything because you know they'd hold you up for sure at the next lock. We know how it works. Another time we were waiting on the blueline for quite awhile, a large U.S. boat was coming up in the lock which was fine but when they got to the top the lock guys decided to fill his water tank in the lock which meant us sitting there even longer. It was at least 45 min. before we got into the lock to continue our journey. The jester was nice but I think they could have done the same thing with him outside the lock and kept us going. There has been lots of bad stories down this way on our travels.

3. Maintenance: needs to be restored, it use to be if you seen a deadhead or stump or tree down when you would get to the lock you'd tell the lock master and they would send someone out in an aluminum boat to get it out of harms way. You don't see this anymore. Our canals are filling with weeds and fallen trees. I know one time in the canal above Mitchell Lake to Kirkfield we could see a small branch a couple inches above the water and as we got closer it was a submerged tree about six feet long under the water. We did report it but it was still there two days later and had been hit. Another time my husband tried to hang onto a large deadhead from the swim platform to move it out of harms way for other boaters. It surely would have capsized a small boat going any speed as they are sometimes know to do in the canal. The deterioration of lock walls, buildings, dams lack of tie ups at the locks due to falling walls and unsafe ground around them. There is nothing worse than arriving at a lock of destination and theres no room. A lot of locks have the shoreline but no wall or tie ups. Another reason we don't get boaters to stay at the locks.

4. Lockage and Mooring Fees: The fees have gone up several times over the years no one can tell us why and we sure have not seen anything different, no improvements to warrant increases. This year we did not purchase a mooring pass. Not worth the aggravation to spent time at the locks because of the battle you have to put up from non boaters after the washroom doors are closed to the public. The long weekend in August in Bobcagean I was pushed and called a bitch for not letting a non boater into the washroom. When we paid our fee for the night the staff gal asked us please do not give the code out to anyone. I told her we never do and never have. I feel when events are going on in these towns, the town themselves should supply johnny on the spots for there own crowds, so we don't have to battle with them for two stalls. Also signs should be posted put on the doors of the washrooms that after lock closing the washrooms are strictly for boaters only. When washrooms are trashed its not boaters that do it, its the general public. It ended up we couldn't even get into the washroom at all that night because of the damage so tell me what did we pay for? Did I report it NO I have several times before and it doesn't seem to do any good. Last year it happened also, same place, I e-mailed three times complaining to the TSW in Peterborough and got no reply back. Another major problem is fishermen they can't read signs or they don't want to. We've gone for a walk and come back with them standing on our swim platform fishing or have had lures bounced off the canvas through the night or even the day. I want to know who would be responsible in replacing a \$4,000 canvas top. Just the other night we were at lock 38 beautiful lock one of our favorites but just before closing a car pulled in and the fishermen came out so right away there were fishing where they weren't suppose to be so the lock master went out gave them direction of where they could fish. It didn't take long about five minutes after all the guys had gone another van load pulled in and they were fishing where ever they wanted to. So we took a walk to the parking lot with a pad of paper and pen and wrote their lic. number down I guess that scared them and left. So is this someway we could help by getting their lic. number and hand it in to keep them from fishing where they are not suppose to. How do they get the washroom codes this same lock the washroom door was propped open at 4a.m. last year when we were here they had us awake with big spot lights tied up and them walking all around the boat. I have washed fish guts and scales out of the sinks which I shouldn't have to do. The guys keep the washrooms pretty spotless but I know too that they sometimes don't know whats gone on at night. Another big problem is one of the locks does not lock there doors at night ever. The lock master says its because he hasn't had a problem, well thats not the point, we have had a problem with Asians being there and I don't like sharing a washroom with 40 to 50 of them when I've paid and they haven't after the lock guys are gone. They come by the van loads. Rosedale is a beautiful lock and we are not far from it but I refuse to pay for a place on the wall and washrooms when its not even locked. The lock master is a fantastic guy but I beleave he is truly wrong by not having these doors locked after hours. Who is he keeping it open for?

5. Notice to Boaters: Removal of So Many Markers

Unbelievable wrong doing. Whos idea was that anyway. From what we have heard it was to cut costs and save money. What a disasterous idea. We know of plenty of people who have had problems this summer getting off the beaten path not being sure of where to go. We have friends that have just gotten there first cruiser it scares them to death seeing the list of all these markers that are gone. We already know of a U.S. boater that is hopping mad hit bottom on Canal Lake has done thousands of dollars damage due to no markers. What will it take to bring them back. For new boaters or visiting boaters they are turned off very quickly from going anywhere on the waterway.

6. Paid Parking at Locks: Has anyone done a study on these parking lots or watched to see how many people actually pay or in most cases or in most cases they drive in go fishing and leave without paying. What can be done to change this.

7. Lack of OPP on the waterway: We bust our butts to follow the rules of the waterway. We never drink and drive and we always go the speed limit or less. So often coming back from Kirkfield or going from Balsam Lake seadoos or runabouts are up on plain and you wish the OPP were there to catch them, you give a holler and they give you the finger. Don't they know they're destroying the waterway. A lot of times the cottage owners are in there aluminum boats at full throttle that do the bombing up and down the waterway. Do they not think they are doing any damage to the shorelines? We don't have the loons around this year on the lake, its sad to think the reason could be from washout of their nests.

On a sunny hot day you could stop every boat heading to the swimming sand bar for a swim and I can guarantee 90% of the boats will have booze in them. A lot of small boats heading out past us they have their beer in hand. This should be stopped. We need our officers on the water not just the boat tied up to the dock.

8. Other issues: Fuel/ Gas gas taxes, its killing a lot of boaters from travelling and where actually does that tax go

Don't break the waterway up by privatizing them that would be a disaster.

Take us back to our longer hours of operation. You stop travelling on the TSW because you can't get back or even go to far.

Things have gotten too expensive its the same old story the average person get pushed out again because it becomes too expensive.

In closing I would like to say the Federal government has not kept their word of maintaining the waterway and funding needs to be restored and put into the right hands to bring back our CANADIAN HISTORICAL WONDER known as " THE TRENT SEVERN WATERWAY" a manmade wonder. We need to maintain our waterway in a better way there for we hope good things come from this panel and things improve for the good of our waterway.

We Thank You for your time and effort, Richard & Glenda Knoblauch