

Shirley Bond

From: "Matt McDonald" <matt.mcdonald@sympatico.ca>
To: "Trent Severn Waterway Panel" <info@tswpanel.ca>
Cc: <eieiomcd@sympatico.ca>
Sent: September 30, 2007 7:44 PM
Subject: Water Control Issue

To Whom It May Concern:

A little while ago I read a request for information from your panel, on issues that may affect the Trent Severn Waterway and its future. Under the list of possible concerns was the issue of water control.

I live in the Village of Victoria Road, just down river from the local damn. The Trent Severn Waterway uses this damn, as well as the smaller damn at the Lift locks to vent water down stream. The problem is that houses, that were permitted to be built, either by the municipality or in my Grandmothers case, by the Government of Canada, are regularly being flooded out.

This year has been an exceptional year for flooding. I have helped cut my Grandmother's lawn for the last 25 years and it has never been as flooded as it has this year. Last weekend was the first time this year I have been able to cut the entire lawn. It has been 50-75% underwater for the whole summer. As a result she has had heavy flooding in her basement for most of the summer, which is unheard of. According to her, that area of lawn that I cut used to have crops planted in it or used as storage for lumber. That would be impossible this year. She says that she has never seen the river so high in all of her 93 years. Why?

I addressed this issue with _____ of the Trent-Severn. He believed that there was a blockage somewhere downstream (i.e. beaver dams or trees across the river) causing the flooding. He said that he needed to get a lot more water downstream for some of the species of fish to spawn and/or in the event of storms producing a lot of rainfall. Recently, I canoed the river from one end to the next to see if there were any obstructions. I did not find any major obstructions, but I could see where the flow may be restricted in different areas. _____ said that he believed the river's flow is so restricted because the river's flow has been choked off, at the Victoria Road damn, for many years. In the past, the river has been dredged, eliminating built up debris and increasing the flow. _____ said that, in this day and age his only course of action is to let more water flow from the damn in Victoria Road and hopefully that would push the debris in the river free. If that were to happen, the Village would be flooded terribly.

I asked one of the local trappers and fisherman, who has worked the area for many, many years, how the river is different today compared to 50+ years ago. He believed that the river is probably more restricted now compared to many years ago because it has not been dredged in many years. He felt that there is probably more silt, weeds and old trees restricting the flow than there ever was before.

An interesting note is that the Lindsay this Week ran a letter to the editor, raising the concern of how low the water level was in Lake Scugog at the same time the water level was at unprecedented height in the Victoria Road area.

It seems to me that this is a time bomb waiting to explode. The inevitable is eventually going to happen. There will be heavy rains some day, the Trent-Severn will need to run water from the damn, the river will be still choked and the residents of Victoria Road will be disastrously flooded. Like the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It would be much better to problem solve around this smaller issue before it snowballs into something unmanageable and very costly.

Thank-you for your help and please keep me updated on the issue.

Sincerely,

Matt McDonald