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## Trent-Severn Water Level Management Study

### Submission of Interest and Concern

Reach Harbour Marina is currently the only operating marina on Lower Buckhorn lake. We are a full service marina/resort with seasonal slips for about 80 large cruisers and houseboats, a few rental cottages, convenience store, and cater for hundreds of cottage boats in the area and passing transient traffic. Other smaller marinas on the lake have closed down in recent years. Our business model of providing full service and catering to large and small boats has kept us viable. Customers with the larger boats generally live aboard for much of the summer and contribute significantly to the local economy. Hundreds of cottages would be without marina services if we were forced to close.

The marina is situated in a picturesque area along 5 acres of natural shoreline. As such, the water depth is quite variable. Many slips have marginal depth and can accommodate only small boats. The only launch ramp, which is critical to our operations, also has a marginal depth. Dredging would be impossible or prohibitively expensive due to the extensive granite floor in the area.

This environment makes our business very sensitive to water levels. Marina operations have been based on the predictable water levels experienced over the last decades (with some built in safety margin). These have remained fairly consistent and manageable for us until 2006. Generally, we have no problems during the navigation season when the locks are open. Parks Canada do a good job in maintaining consistent water levels during this period. Any issues have been due to exceptionally high rainfalls or mechanical/hydro failures at the locks and have been quickly remedied. Our main concern is with the pre and post navigation season periods. These periods, of approximately 4 weeks each, is when we launch and haul most of the boats. Most of our customers expect to be able to make full use of the short navigation season. Pre 2006, water levels dropped only a foot during the pre and post season periods and another 2 feet over winter. In 2006 levels remained almost at winter levels until lock opening substantially delaying the launch of all our large boats. In fall, they dropped about 2 feet for about a week immediately after the locks closed causing delays in hauling larger

boats, then went up again and have remained up for winter.

Our concerns would be addressed if water levels could be returned to the traditional and predictable levels experienced prior to 2006. This means consistent levels during the navigation season and a drop of no more than 1 foot in the one month pre and post navigation season periods. Also implementation of a better water level monitoring system is necessary – we are aware that Parks Canada is working on this. During our conversations with them, it appears that they they do not have an accurate view of the levels on our lake. Our proposed scenario seems consistent with the wishes of most other stakeholders on the system.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute to this study and would be willing to contribute further on an on-going basis if deemed useful.

Yours truly  
Brian and Jane McKimmie