



Panel on the Future of the Trent-Severn Waterway

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OMOA PRESENTATION

JUNE 20, 2007



Who is the OMOA?

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- **Largest recreational industry boating association in Canada**
- **Over 650 members**
- **Represents private, municipal, dry land, and water-based marinas**

Recreational Boating - Economic Impact

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- **Canada - \$11.1 Billion - 110,000 jobs**
- **Ontario - \$4.4 Billion - 43,000 jobs**

OMOA Programs

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www.marinaontario.com



www.discoverboating.ca



www.5x10.ca

OMOA and the Trent-Severn

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- **88 OMOA members**
- **9,000 boat slips**
- **30,000 boats in the system**

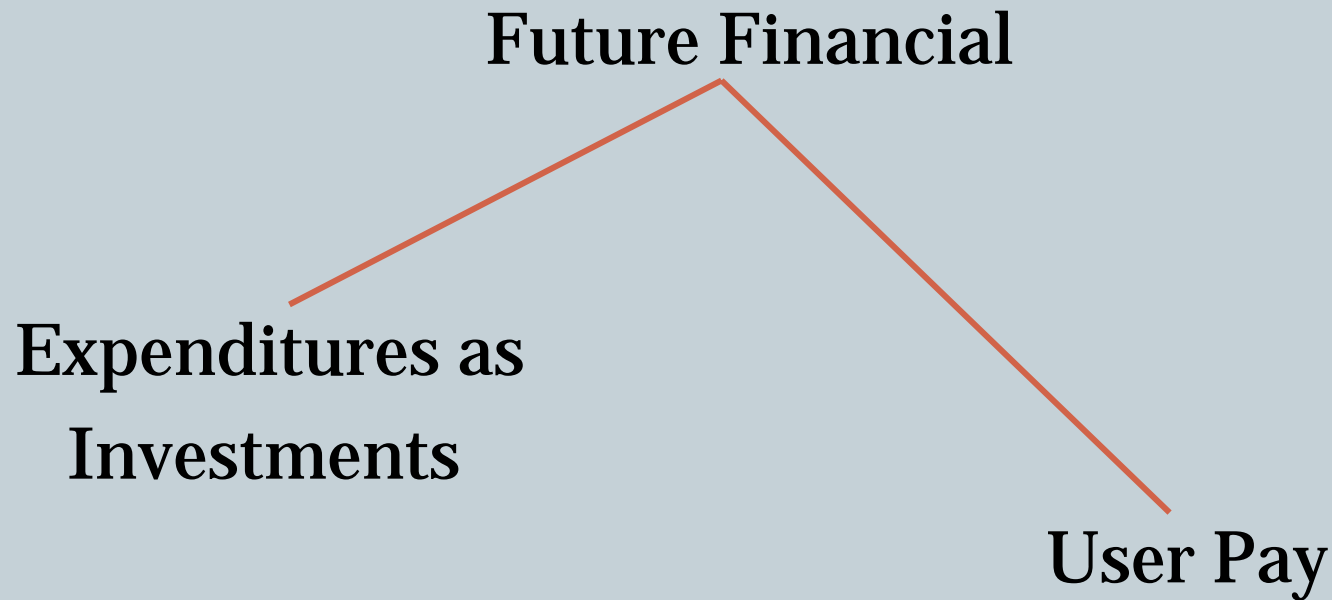
OMOA Major Issues on the Trent-Severn

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- **Marketing**
- **Customer Service**
- **Retention of Crown Owned Land**
- **Environmental Issues**
- **Future Financial Challenges**

OMOA Major Issues on the Trent-Severn

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TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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1. Values of the TSW and quality of life

- Alternative quality of life
- Historical significance
- Home to many retirees
- Economic benefit
- Relaxing atmosphere

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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2. Future vision for the TSW

- Share with Canada and the USA
- Maintain attractive characteristics
- Protect the environment
- Maintain the infrastructure
- Strategic investment

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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3. Water management system

- May not reflect current knowledge of global warming
- Outdated historical data
- Need for water management experts
- Preserve the water

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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4. How can communities benefit from their location?

- Marketing and promotion
- Include all aspects of the waterway and stakeholders
- Crown land
- Additional hydro facilities

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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5. Visitor Experiences

- Access to the water
- Operation of the locks
- Historical charm
- Cultural events
- Ecotourism
- Special events
- Create a year-round experience

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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6. Land-based visitors

- Boats moving through the locks
- Parking
- Park and swimming areas
- Adequate facilities
- Signage
- Promotional events
- Community involvement

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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7. Near urban open space and Greater Golden Horseshoe region

- **Protect public land**
- **Develop public land**
- **Marketing campaign**

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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8. Alternative funding models

- Consider expenditures as investments
- Charge every boat within the system
- Charge ramp fees
- Charge water lot leases
- Charge for water consumption and hydro electric

TSW Panel Questions to OMOA

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9. Setting of priorities for future investments

- Review of past reports
- Independent board representing all stakeholders

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Panel Discussion



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THE OMOA

The OMOA is the largest recreational industry boating association in Canada. With over 650 members from all facets of the recreational boating industry, the OMOA represents private, municipal, dry land and water-based marinas as well as all of the major suppliers to the industry.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF RECREATIONAL BOATING

Recreational boating in Canada represents over 11 billion dollars to the economic impact of the country. In Ontario the economic impact is over 4 billion dollars and the industry provides approximately 43,000 jobs. To many northern and small communities in Ontario, recreational boating is the major industry for the communities. The OMOA and other boating associations in the country are presently completing a new economic impact study that will be ready within two months.

OMOA PROGRAMS

The OMOA is involved in the following projects within the boating communities:

- CLEAN MARINE ECO-RATING PROGRAM
- DISCOVER BOATING
- 5 X 10 SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN
- CREATION OF A BOATING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE WITH GEORGIAN COLLEGE
- MEMBERS OF THE OMOA SIT OF ADVISORY PANELS FOR THE TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY, RIDEAU CANAL, CANADIAN COAST GUARD, GREAT LAKES WATER LEVEL COMMITTEES
- THE OMOA IS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO
- MANY OTHER AREAS INCLUDING WATER LOT LEASES, VESSEL LICENSING, SAFETY, NAVIGATIONAL ISSUES AND REGIONAL TOURISM COMMITTEES.
- I WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.MARINASONTARIO.COM, WWW.DISCOVERBOATING.CA, AND WWW.5X10.CA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION.

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OMOA AND THE TRENT-SEVERN

At the present time there are 88 OMOA members located directly on the waterway.

Within these facilities are approximately 9,000 boat slips.

Our members service at least 30,000 boats within the system.

OMOA members are a vital link to ensure the continuation of boating activities within the waterway. They not only service boaters within their own marinas they also service cottagers, trailerable boats as well as visiting boaters.

MAJOR ISSUES ON THD TRENT-SEVERN FOR OMOA MEMBERS

A committee of OMOA members met to discuss the important issues to the overall system and to members of the OMOA. The following is a very brief overview of their findings:

1. MARKETING

The one issue that was repeated time and time again by the committee was the need for a long term strategic marketing plan that would promote the entire system. There was a very strong feeling that the Trent-Severn Waterway was an extremely important asset to all of the communities within the system but that it was virtually unknown to the general public. The committee felt that all of the features and benefits of the system needed to be identified and actively promoted. The plan would include not only the Federal and Provincial Governments, Parks Canada, all of the municipalities within the system as well as the private sector. All tourism operators within the system should be a part of the plan. The plan would require a serious financial commitment and should be professionally done. The committee felt that in fairness to the management of the Trent-Severn Waterway this was not their field of expertise. The marketing campaign would include all aspects of the system including: lifestyle, boating, cultural and heritage, land-based visitors, events, major attractions along the system such as the lift locks and Big Chute Railway, environment and nature.

2. CUSTOMER SERVICE

The committee felt strongly that the operation of the system should be driven more by the need to provide customer service. The single biggest factor is the need for longer operating hours within the system. This is not a new issue nor will it come as a surprise to management of the system, it does however have a major impact on the use of the locks. The unionized members of Parks Canada that operate the system must become part of

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this customer service mandate. The committee does not have an answer for this problem but their feeling is that at the present time employees within the system do not really care about customer service.

3. RETENTION OF CROWN OWNED LAND

The Government of Canada must ensure that the ownership of existing land along the system remains public property. Faced with serious financial requirements for future operating costs, it would be very easy for the Government to sell some of the lands presently owned by the waterway. The committee felt this would be a bad mistake. In the past there have been recommendations to improve areas for visitors to the waterway; the committee felt these recommendations should be pursued. Some of the suggestions would include creation of park-like settings along the canals, swimming areas, seating and viewing facilities for visitors coming to watch the boats lock through the locks.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The future environmental issues are very important to the long range appeal of the Trent-Severn Waterway. There is presently a very serious disconnect between the Ministry of Environment, the management of the Trent-Severn Waterway and the recreational boating industry. The recent treatment by the Federal Government of the OMOA Clean Marine program is proof of the lack of co-operation between the Government and the industry. Environmental maintenance of the waterway will have a major impact on the appeal of the system in the future.

5. FUTURE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Faced with the rising operating costs, increasing maintenance expenses, reduced lockage fees and general inflation; a new model must be found for the financial operation of the system. We are assuming that the system must be maintained as it has become the major source of water level control for many of the lakes and communities within the waterway; it is therefore not an option to simply shut down the locks and terminate the operation of the system.

The committee discussed two alternatives to future financing:

EXPENDITURES AS INVESTMENTS

The first alternative was to accept the fact that the waterway is responsible for the creation of significant economic benefit for all of the communities within it. This

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economic benefit creates employment, generates income for the residents, and provides revenues to the Federal, Provincial and Municipal Governments. Based on these facts the Governments should look upon the expenditures as investments in the future of the waterway and not as expenses. Increasing use of the system will generate a return on these investments. At the present time the revenue received from the collection of fuel taxes used in recreational boating is not returned to the boating industry in any form. Many states in the US use all of the money collected from fuel taxes on the water for the benefit of recreational boating. The State of New York has recently implemented such a policy and removed all of the lockage charges from the NY Canal System.

USER PAY

Accepting the fact that the users of the system should be responsible for some of the costs of the system, the committee strongly believes that the cost of maintaining the overall waterway must not be placed solely upon the boaters transiting the locks. As all of the residents within the system benefit from the control of water levels and the economic benefits of the overall system, the committee feels that all users should pay to maintain the system if the Governments do not wish to fund the entire future cost of operations. The exact form of the fee would have to be determined; it might be a levy upon all boats within the system, a fee on all properties, or some other method to be determined. A nominal fee of \$50 per boat would more than replace the lockage fees presently collected on the system and would spread the burden over a much larger group. Continuing to place the burden on lockage charges exclusively will only hasten the decline in the use of the locks.

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TSW PANEL QUESTIONS

1. VALUES OF THE TSW AND QUALITY OF LIFE?

- Represents an alternative quality of life compared to the ever increasing urbanization taking place in Canada. With the close proximity of many millions of people who are able to enjoy the TSW within a day trip.
- The system has a heritage and historical significance to the community that should be preserved
- The area is increasingly becoming home to many retirees
- Significant economic benefit is created because of the existence of the TSW
- The canal represents a relaxing place to visit with a different atmosphere from the major urban centres.

2. FUTURE VISION FOR THE TSW

- Share the benefits of the TSW with Ontario, Canada and the United States through a professional marketing plan
- Maintain the present quality of life and characteristics that continue to attract people to the TSW. Provide an attractive place for people to bring their families and visit the area.
- Protect the environment by working together
- Maintain the infrastructure of the system
- Treat the TSW as a strategic investment for the people of Canada and residents throughout the system.

3. WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

- The committee felt that the present water management system may not reflect current knowledge of global warming.
- There was a feeling that much of the decision making process dealing with this topic was based upon outdated historical data. Perhaps the employment of

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knowledgeable water management experts from outside the present management of the TSW may add some benefit to senior management of the system.

- The committee felt that maintenance of water levels might be better controlled when the water was high to ensure adequate water at later times in the year. There may be alternative methods to preserve the water without causing a risk of flooding. These alternatives may require significant capital expenditures but may in the long run be worth the investment.

4. HOW CAN COMMUNITIES BENEFIT FROM THEIR LOCATION?

- The committee feels that professional marketing and promotion is the key to creating additional benefits.
- The marketing effort must cover all aspects of the waterway and include all stakeholders.
- The maintenance and development of visitor facilities on crown owned land will help to bring more tourism to the area.
- Development of additional hydro facilities although not in our field of expertise would appear to be a worthwhile endeavour.

5. VISITOR EXPERIENCES

- Access to water is a key element
- The operation of the locks
- The historical charm of the waterway
- Cultural events may be available at all times of the year
- Eco tourism is a growing activity and the area has many opportunities to develop these activities
- Develop and increase the promotion of special events such as Christmas in July. Increase the exposure of existing events within the system.
- Create an atmosphere for a year round experience by promoting activities in the off season as well as the summer.

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6. LAND-BASED VISITORS

- Ensure there are adequate boats moving through the locks, as this is a major reason visitors come to the locks.
- Create additional parking facilities; perhaps introduce old cars or buses to move people through the towns from parking to locks. Create a historic feel to the experience.
- Develop park and swimming areas for day trippers
- Make the locks more appealing with adequate washrooms, garbage facilities; create lock master competitions for beautification.
- The signage along the canal needs to be improved.
- Tie the locks into promotion of local events. This must involve the local municipalities and private businesses.
- Parks Canada alone cannot accomplish this task, being a government agency creates some problems. The entire community must participate in the program. A separate board of directors made up of stakeholders from all areas should be involved in the marketing and promotion of the system.

7. NEAR URBAN OPEN SPACE & GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE REGION

- Ensure the ownership of public land is protected and stays in the public's hands.
- Develop public land and ensure public access. Create swimming areas and picnic grounds while maintaining the natural beauty of the area.
- Let the public know about the TSW through the marketing campaign.

8. ALTERNATIVE FUNDING MODELS

- Follow the NY lead and consider expenditures as investments to earn a return.
- Charge every boat within the system for the maintenance of the system
- Charge trailer boats ramp fees

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- Charge all facilities on the waterway a water lot lease similar to the one proposed for the marinas. Although this may have some political downside why should marinas be the only ones to pay such a fee?
- Review the charges for use of the water both for consumption and hydro electric purposes.

9. SETTING OF PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE INVESTMENTS

- The committee briefly reviewed some of the reports on the TSW that have been prepared in the past; many excellent suggestions were made that have not yet been implemented. We would suggest a thorough review of these reports may help the panel reach some conclusions.
- The committee feels that an independent board representing all stakeholders would be an excellent vehicle to make future recommendations for the operation of the TSW. The funding model would need to be established so the board would understand its mandate and have the necessary freedom to act with the best long term consideration of the TSW in mind. The board should not be unduly swayed by having each decision subject to the political realities and whims of the day.