



info@yqna.ca chair@yqna.ca

TORONTO ISLAND
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION



ticaexecutive@gmail.com

November 5, 2020

Delivered by E-mail to the International Joint Commission

Regarding potential flooding of the Upper St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario

Thank you very much for your letter dated October 19, 2020. We appreciate that you have taken the time to respond.

We don't see the point of discussing the modelled situation without the dam. The dam is there and has been for decades. We are all living with the result, and with the Plan to regulate the flows through the dam for the benefit, or lack of disbenefit, of all affected parties.

We are extremely disappointed with the Board's decision not to deviate from plan 2014 to establish a cushion against unforeseen increased lake inflow events as they did last year. We have found the following announcement on the Board's Facebook page, and appreciate the fact that the Board is open to reviewing the situation again later in the Fall.

“The International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board met on 20 October to discuss the current conditions and possible regulatory strategies for fall, winter and spring 2021. After reviewing the conditions and the risk reductions associated with potential regulation strategies, the Board again came to consensus decision to maintain the current strategy of adhering to Plan 2014 prescribed flows through the fall and not pursue additional deviation authority from the IJC at this point in time. Given the uncertainty of fall conditions, the Board will meet again before winter to allow for continued consideration of all potential regulatory strategies for winter and spring that may help reduce the risk of high water levels throughout the system in the spring of 2021.”

We continue to advocate for the creation of a buffer to protect against unforeseen weather events and encourage the Board to establish strict early warning indicators that would trigger deviation from Plan 2014 and employ early intervention strategies to remediate the situation and prevent potential flooding while the opportunity to do so exists (before the Ottawa River spring runoff begins).

Please advise us as to the matters that will be considered at the next meeting in reaching a decision on deviating from Plan 2014. Does the Board monitor snow pack in the Ottawa River watershed? Are there reliable forecasts of Winter and Spring precipitation across the Great Lakes system? Are there any specific criteria that the board relies on to seek deviation from Plan 2014, and do these criteria permit sufficiently early intervention to remediate increased water levels to prevent potential flooding on a timely basis?

While Lake Ontario is at about its average level right now, the upper lakes are still very high and releasing tremendous amounts of water which must get out through the dam. Once a flood occurs on the Ottawa River, it will be too late to deal with the flow from Lake Ontario and it will be forced to back up.

As residents who have lived through two prolonged floods, we can assure you that every small reduction in lake levels makes a difference. We live in and with the flood waters for weeks, and feel every inch and centimetre. Please do not underestimate the value of small reductions.

We are again asking the Board to seek authority to deviate from Plan 2014 through the Winter, as you did last year, in order to create a buffer with Lake Ontario's level below average.

We look forward to your affirmative reply.

Sincerely,



Carolyn Johnson
Co-chair of YQNA



Angelo Bertolas
Co-chair of YQNA



Tony Farebrother
Chair, TICA