

CEWF Priorities 2014



Seeking an **Integrated Approach to Water Management at the Watershed Level** remains the Coalition's top priority in 2014. The Coalition believes that by seeking common cause with other stakeholders in the Trent watershed we can advance a broad range of issues in a more effective and equitable manner than by individually promoting our own 'special' interests. Such an approach applies to the governance, maintenance of infrastructure, public safety, and water management operations of the Trent Severn Waterway (TSW). It also requires a clear distinction between the two principal activities of the TSW: (1) Waterway (canal) operations and (2) Water Management for the watershed.

This priority would be advanced if Parks Canada would accept and implement the key recommendations in the 2011 Water Management Study completed for the TSW by AECOM. **These specifically include the need for a hydrologic model for runoff forecasting and a hydraulic model to improve system operations.** Together these would provide the TSW with a constraint-based water management planning and operations tool able to incorporate data relating to a range of water management variables including safe navigation, downstream wastage, protection of fish habitat and wetlands etc. These water management variables relate to ensuring public safety as well as sound water management and environmental stewardship.

If adopted, we believe the results would include:

- Better conservation of the water resource;
- Improved navigation on the reservoir and flow-through lakes;
- Stewardship of natural resources (including wetlands and shorelines);
- Increased sophistication in spring flood forecasting and management;
- Confidence in the safety of the dams and related infrastructure;
- Optimization of the winter-set levels on the reservoir lakes.

In addition to these planning and operational aspects of water management the Coalition will emphasize the need for improved communication of water management issues and education of our stakeholder community with regard to the challenges and opportunities facing the TSW.

In 2014 the Coalition will therefore:

- Stress the value of the AECOM report recommendations especially regarding modeling;
- Highlight areas for data collection and study relating to system constraints such as: trout spawning bed locations; winter-set levels and adjustments; local flood plain mapping;
- Continue to meet and work with Member lake associations to raise the level of understanding of water management issues and to develop 'preferred water levels' on the reservoir and flow-through lakes during navigation season for transmission to TSW;
- Urge release of the dam safety reviews by Parks Canada;
- Provide material to Coalition Members to engage candidates in the upcoming local and provincial elections to encourage them to adopt sound water management policies.