Transcripts

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION
LAKE ONTARIO -- ST. LAWRENCE RIVER STUDY
PUBLIC INTEREST ADVISORY GROUP PUBLIC MEETING
ROYAL ST. LAWRENCE YACHT CLUB
1350 BORD-DU-LAC DORVAL, QUÉBEC
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16 , 2004
7:00 P.M. -- 9:20 P.M.

COMMISSION MIXTE INTERNATIONALE
ÉTUDE INTERNATIONALE SUR LE LAC ONTARIO ET LE FLEUVE SAINT-LAURENT
RÉUNION PUBLIQUE DU GROUPE CONSULTATIF SUR L'INTÉRÊT PUBLIC
ROYAL ST. LAWRENCE YACHT CLUB
1350, BORD-DU-LAC DORVAL (QUÉBEC)
LE JEUDI 16 SEPTEMBRE 2004
19 h à 21 h 20

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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2004
EVENING SESSION

…Upon commencing at 7:00 p.m.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS
BY MARC HUDON

Marc Hudon, as Chairperson, called the Public Meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. He introduced the members of the Study Board members present and illustrated some of the work that had been done by the Advisory Study Group.

As well, he outlined the agenda for the evening, noting that there would be a power point presentation on the state of the development of the project, followed by a question and answer period, which would be shared with Greece, New York, through a telephone link-up. He encouraged everyone to participate and share their comments, views, ideas and concerns with both the Study Board members and the interested parties present in Greece, in order to bring their modifications to the project.

POWER POINT PRESENTATION BY MARCEL LUSSIER

Marcel Lussier then proceeded to the power point presentation, giving a brief outline of the origin of the Public Interest Advisory Study Group, its mandate and its activities to date, as well as its deadline for the completion of the project. He stated that they were all volunteers, representing different locations and interests around the Lake and down the River, and emphasized that their job was to make sure that everyone's concerns, ideas and suggestions, expressed at the public meetings, would be addressed in the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Water Levels Study.

He went on to give a brief history of the International Joint Commission and their mandate and activities. He reviewed very salient points pertaining to different areas; however, in terms of the Dorval-Montreal region, he highlighted the following points:

The first level, 8.1 m, is an alert that flooding may occur and is occurring in some locations. The second level, 8.6 m, is critical and flooding is more extensive.

Riparians, people who live along the edge of the Lake or the River, can be affected by all of these performance indicators.

About once in every 25 years, we should allow water levels above 7.55 m at Montreal Harbour to persist for about three (3) months to increase flooding of wetlands and destroy over-dominant wetland vegetation.

As long as it does not hurt other stakeholders too much, try to have water levels at 6.55 m levels and lower at the right time to ensure flowering of perennial plant species and germination of seeds of annual species.

About once every five (5) years, Montreal Harbour water levels should be allowed to drop below 5.55 m and persist at those levels for at least a month to allow submerged vegetation to develop in the shallow areas.

To support fish spawning, we should try to have the levels above 7.55 m as often as possible and let those levels persist for between two (2) to six (6) weeks.

During ice formation, to minimize muskrat mortality, water levels should be maintained at near constant levels and between 5.55 and 7.55 m.

Remember that all of these water optimum water levels for various stakeholders must not hurt other stakeholders any more than they would have been hurt before the Seaway was built.

The shipping and cruise companies want to minimize the frequency, severity and duration of these levels in the Port.

Above 8.55 m, some port installations are flooded and speed reductions are imposed. The level of 6.15 is the optimal loading for most deep draft vessels.

However, if the level goes down to 5.85 m, there would be loading reductions for most vessels. If the level gets as low as 5.55 m, the ships cannot be loaded at all.

Upon establishing that the Greece link-up was functional, Marc Hudon subsequently proceeded with the question and answer period.

QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD FACILITATED BY MARC HUDON

MARC HUDON: We invite you to take your places, those of you who can. We are going to be on in one minute with Greece, New York. Start moving to your seats slowly but surely. Is there anybody in Greece?

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes. Please speak clearly so that everyone in the other remote location of Dorval, Quebec, Canada can hear you as well. When you come to the microphone, we ask that you state your name and tell us where you are from, and please spell your name as well so that we can be back in touch with you after this is recorded.

We ask everyone, who is asking a question, to be as concise as possible, and we also ask that everyone, who has occasion to answer a question, also be concise because our teleconference with Dorval will have to end promptly at 9 p.m. After that, if you wish, however, you can stay and talk with any member of the Study Team who might be able to assist you in answering a question or just addressing any concern that you have.

Now, if anyone happens to ask a question that might be very similar to the one you were planning to ask, please consider delaying asking your question until other people have had a chance to ask other questions, and (inaudible) format or degree, and we can take that up.

If, for some reason, your question is not answered tonight, we can assure you that, if you bring it to our attention or turn it in, in writing, we will try our very best to get an answer for you.

I believe that, at this time, we are ready to join with the remote location of Dorval, Quebec, Canada. I believe that Marc Hudon, who is also a member of the Public Interest Advisory Group, may be the facilitator there. If we are connected, is Marc Hudon there?

MARC HUDON (D): Yes, he is all there. How are you doing, Henry?

HENRY STEWART (G): Marc, how are you? Thank you very much. I am glad we are connected here. We hope that this will be a very informative session for both the individuals here in the town of Greece, near Rochester, New York, U.S.A. and those in Dorval, Quebec, Canada. Do you have anyone who would like to start off the questions, Marc?

MARC HUDON (D): Well, Henry, I think that we started first last night so maybe tonight we will let you go ahead with the first one.

HENRY STEWART (G): Alright. Is there anyone here who would like to come to the microphone please to start off? We will first start with the young woman over there. Please go to the microphone and identify yourself.

K. COE (G): My name is Kay Coe, C-O-E. I live in Hamlin, New York. My question is: When considering the water levels and (inaudible) potential, does the group evaluate the effects of the (inaudible) redemption on the shoreline?

HENRY STEWART (G): That is a very good question, very timely. We even hope that the ferry may be directed, in that this is becoming even more timely. Is there anyone who might want to answer? Mac, would like to answer that?

MAX STREIBEL (G): Okay. This may require a study on all of the things brought up. I think that the hopes are that, through the ferry, when the ferry does start up again, that they be very much made aware of the fact that they have to do something to change either their route, speed or what have you because there have been a lot of concerns, not only from Hamlin, but right down through part of Greece, but that per se is not part of the lake level study.

HENRY STEWART (G): Is there anyone else who has anything to say about that? If not, we will move on to the next question, but were you going to make a comment about that?

LEO SAWYKO (G): Just a comment on that. I have a property in Hamlin also. It would seem to me that one of the areas that you might consider studying is the distance from shore. You might recommend full (inaudible) travel, depending on the various lake levels because it is a tremendous wave action at the end of the (inaudible).

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Sawyko. Are there any comments from the Study Team? Pete? Susan?

PETER SUSACK(ph) (G): My name is Pete Susack. I am a member of the Coastal Technical Working Group that has been involved with the scientific component of this study for the last three years.

I think it is critical to point out that a ferry, the ferry factor, that is running on the lake here, is regulated by FAE, federal entities, other than the IJC. This study has involved, in its first study, to talk about lake level fluctuations, the rise and fall relation of regulations, and not something completely different to permitting a ferry to travel internationally across the board to Toronto.

So I think that, if you are looking for a bone to pick, it is with the state agencies of the coast guard that has permitted that ferry, and those are the people, I would suggest to you, with whom you have to pursue this issue.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Pete. At this time, is that a follow-up to this topic?

VICKY THOMAS (G): Yes. My name is Vicky Thomas, T-H-O-M-A-S, and I live in Kirk, New York. (inaudible). And I absolutely (inaudible) I am not sure what the county and the city have done, if even a study had been done to see about erosions and (inaudible) effect (inaudible) and stuff like that. And pretty much, the city passed the complaints over to the coast guard in Buffalo and that they catch people.

My (inaudible) catch people, but you never get a phone call back. Personally, I do not think they care. The coast guard from Buffalo said that, because they are five miles out, they are in the shipping league and they are within their legal right. So, unless you change legislation, (inaudible) what is going on. I think the whole thing is just not so much the barrier where we are going. It is the erosion which seems to be an issue with the levels of the lake and the erosion. So I think that that question came in (inaudible) the erosion.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you very much. I think that, if there are no other comments, with respect to that issue, we should, in fairness, switch to the Dorval location and give them a chance to ask their first question. Marc.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Henry. Okay, so do you have any questions or comments in the room?

HENRY STEWART (G): Marc, can you hear us?

MARC HUDON (D): Yes. Henry, can you hear me? Are you there?

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes, Marc. If you would wish to have your group ask a question at this time.

MARC HUDON (D): Yes. We have a gentleman. Can you hear me now?

HENRY STEWART (G): It is difficult to hear, I think.

MARC HUDON (D): How is that, Henry? Can you hear me better now?

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes, Marc. Thank you.

MARC HUDON (D): Okay. So we have a gentleman. Please give your name.

GARTH RICHARDSON (D): My name is Garth Richardson. I am with an organization called "The Green Coalition".

MARC HUDON (D): Speak slowly and close to the mike.

GARTH RICHARDSON (D): Okay. I am told I must speak more slowly and closer to the microphone. I am curious about the linkage between the levels in the lake and the river and the groundwater levels, in terms of what impact, if there is a link, which I presume there is, whether the variation… whether the environmental impacts of the variation in the ground water levels are, and whether that is considered in this study.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you very much. Does anyone in the room want to field that? Please, David.

DAVID FAY (D): David Fay from the Hydrology and Hydraulics Technical Working Group of the study. I also work for Environment Canada. I think the short answer to your question, Garth, is that we have kind of peripherally considered it, but we do not think that it is a big factor in our study, but we do not know an awful lot about the interaction between the lake and ground water. We just think that it is fairly small, and that is the short answer.

MARC HUDON (D): Is there anyone else who would like to add something? On the same point? Okay. That is it on this point, Henry. It would be back to you now.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Marc. Is there anyone from the Study Team who wishes here to address that issue beyond what David has mentioned? Gene Stakhiv.

EUGENE STAKHIV (G): I will take a shot at it because, you know, in fact, we know that, if you recall that water balance figure that we showed earlier in the presentation, the water coming into Lake Erie, 85%, the precipitation, the evaporation. So we know three out of the four numbers. We deduce the groundwater input for the total water balance and, out of that, we can also deduce if it is a relatively small number.

So we do have very good figures for four out of the five variables except for groundwater. So it is whatever is left over from the overall water balance and, from that, we can deduce that it is a relatively small contribution.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Gene Stakhiv, U.S. Co-Director of the Study Team. Anyone else wishing to address the issue? If not, we could move on to the next question from our individuals in the U.S. Would anyone like to ask a question at this time? Thank you.

KEN BUDINSKI (G): My name is Ken Budinski. I live here in Greece, New York. That is spelled B-U-D-I-N-S-K-I.

My question is: What is the economic justification for international shipping west of Montreal? The last time that I looked into the matter, there were only 1,000 ships a year using this, and it seems like everybody is wanting higher water for shipping and hydro and recreational boating. There is no tendency to bring the water level back to what it used to be and what it is probably supposed to be, but everybody seems to want higher levels.

I have been keeping track of the water levels, every day, for the last 14 years, and I see nothing but that it is going up. A lot of it has to do with this shipping thing. What is the economic justification? It is probably only a small number of ships, and how much money do these ships pay with respect to the cost of keeping the Seaway open for them? I just do not see it. Has this been addressed?

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Ken.

Would anyone from the Study Board itself wish to answer that question? I do not know if we have anyone from commercial navigation here. Roger, thank you.

ROGER HABERLY (G): My name is Roger (inaudible). I think that the general question was, if I interpreted it correctly: Why is there a need for higher water levels potentially towards the end of the year?

KEN BUDINSKI (G): No. What is the justification?

ROGER HABERLY (G): The justification for the higher water levels?

KEN BUDINSKI (G): It would bring it into alien species with these ships and terrorist risks.

ROGER HABERLY (G): The CUA is used heavily by commercial navigation to bring commodities through Canada and through the United States. The water levels also impact the amount of hydro power that can be generated through the power plants themselves. For the commercial navigation study itself, we looked at five years of shipping, 1995 to 1999, and, during that five-year period, there were approximately 28,000 vessels that actually used the seaway system. So they are quite heavily utilizing the St. Lawrence. This converts to somewhere around 55 million tons of actual commodities moving from the Montreal area, up through the St. Lawrence to Lake Ontario, and then to the (inaudible) landscape and in through Canada.

Some of the major flows that go back and forth are iron ore coming from Labrador, Quebec, going through the Seaway, going to steel plants in Canada and the United States. There is…

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER-F (G): (off mike comments…inaudible)

ROGER HABERLY (G): There is iron ore that comes to Cleveland and Toledo and there is a steel plant located directly at Toledo, which would take iron ore, and that is shipped into the United States. The Seaway is also used for grain going out from Lake Superior through the system for export to Europe. Two major movements: grain out, iron ore in. Those are the two uses of the Seaway for the countries.

KEN BUDINSKI (G): …(off mike comments…inaudible)…

ROGER HABERLY (G): Doug might have some insight on that.

DOUG CUTHBERT (G): Thank you, Roger. My name is Doug Cuthbert. I am the Canadian Co-Director of the study. Roger is basically the U.S. lead of our Commercial Navigation Working Group.

There is perhaps a misplaced concern that hydro power and shipping interests want high levels on Lake Ontario.

Arlene, while I talk, if you could bring up that screen that shows the bizarre levels for commercial navigation.

Hydro powers themselves, in my perspective, do not want high water levels. They want flows down the river, but the levels of Lake Ontario really do not affect hydro power at all. The level in the St. Lawrence River, immediately following two dams, does, but to say that hydro power wants higher water levels, I think, is incorrect. It wants the flow down the river. Whether the water levels are high or low, it is the flow that they are concerned about. In terms of the navigation, these figures here effectively say that, if the elevation of Lake Ontario is above 243.9, and that is a foot below what it is right now. I think that we are at 246, roughly, now so that is two feet lower what it is now. Then they are unable to… then they have to reduce shipping, but, as long as it is above that figure, they do not have any limitations relative to a drop in their shipping. If it goes above 247.2, then they are concerned at the high end. So, on Lake Ontario, I think that it is a misnomer to say that commercial shipping and hydro power want high levels. Now, down the St. Lawrence River, it is another story, but, Montreal downstream, shipping certainly is affected by water levels, and low levels are a big concern now. Thank you.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug. Is there anyone else who wishes to comment? Frank Sciremammano from the Study Board.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G):): I am also a member of the Control Board. In my ten years on the Control Board, navigation on Lake Ontario has never requested higher levels and, generally, the effect of navigation is really Montreal Harbour, which wants more water, which actually has the effect of lowering Lake Ontario. So I think that the question is a little misplaced for navigation. I would agree with the other speakers on that.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Frank. Does anyone else wish to address this issue? If not, we should turn it back over to Marc Hudon for another question from Dorval. Marc.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Henry. Can you hear me?

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes. Thank you.

MARC HUDON (D): Okay. Yes, we have a question in the room.

CLAUDE MAILLOUX (D): It is a question and a comment. Do you hear the translation? My name is Claude Mailloux. I represent a group of users of the St. Lawrence River, called the Group of St. Lawrence Users, and "WRESTLE"(ph) is our acronym.

Our reason for being is to have a group of stakeholders who are preoccupied by water levels in the St. Lawrence River. Most of us, or almost all of us, have lived through the impacts of the last five years, due to the very low water levels that we have seen. These situations have led us to a need to understand the situation. Why did this occur, and why has it happened three out of the last six years, if memory serves me right?

And we have done some research. We have done a survey with the users. These are people from navigation, also people involved with coastal inhabitants, marinas, hydroelectricity, the municipalities, recreation and the environment. So just about everything that can be considered as a use of the river is represented in our group and participates in our work. Our survey has highlighted some things.

First, when the level of the river descends below the chart zero - and that happened for prolonged periods in the last few years - there are some very big difficulties for users. These situations have to be avoided at all cost.

From an observation, such as that one, there is a common position that can be summarized as follows. The zero of the maps is the minimum acceptable for users of the St. Lawrence, but, when I say "minimum", it really is a minimum threshold. Everything below that is unacceptable due to the impacts that it produces.

We could describe the comfort level as being 30 centimetres or one foot above the zero of the maps because, starting at one foot and above, the impacts are much less.

So this position, we have described it in a document, as well as the results of our survey. I have some copies with me if anybody wants any. I would be pleased to give you a copy. We also wanted our position distributed. The Commission has already received a copy. We wanted to highlight that to the St. Lawrence interests can be specific in many ways.

Traditionally, the coastal users or various citizens groups, especially at Lake Ontario, they have shown an awareness, a mobilization that was greater than that observed here. We wanted to counter this situation by creating our grouping and by having a position that represents the interests of the St. Lawrence River. I have briefly described it here, but, in my written document, you will find a more complete version.

Now, concerning the study, I am surprised that, after three years, that we have not been given any results of the work that has been done so far. I mean, we are now at less than one year away from the end of the study. We are being consulted on the study, but we are being offered a description of the issues, but no results.

We know that, for those who follow the work closely, that there are some results that are known, even if they are preliminary. Even if for the moment they describe some trends more than certainties, I think that they should have been given for consultation because, according to what we have been described, this week's consultation, or these days anyway, is the most important one in the process, and now is the time to react.

But all that we can do is react by saying: "Well, you have forgotten this or that." It would have been much more interesting to be able to react by saying: "Well, the results that you have obtained or the trends that you have seen correspond or do not correspond to the expectations of the stakeholders."

But, right now, we do not have much meat to put on the bones. The website of the study, or that of the Joint Commission, is not any more eloquent on the results. We find some generalities or very technical aspects, but almost nothing on the results of the working groups, and that is a sad case. I mean, we would have expected to have more meat on the bones in terms of consultation.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Mailloux.

Does anyone in the room here want to comment on the reasons as to why there are not any more data available on the ongoing work?

ANDRÉ CARPENTIER (D): André Carpentier from the Study Group and also from the Control Commission.

I am surprised to hear Mailloux's comments, especially when he says that there are not very many results. Well, in a presentation like this one, we cannot give you all the results. What we wanted to do was to summarize them, give you the highlights, giving you the lines and the metrics, and all the results are there.

The conclusions by the working groups are represented in terms of requests for levels that need to be satisfied or avoided, as we have mentioned previously, and the documentation is available on the website or upon request

You must understand that we cannot present all these results, for each interest group, but they do exist and they are available.

Now, the comment that there was a survey in their stakeholder group, well, the Joint Commission has received these results and they have been included in the results and comments that we will take into account in our study.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, André.

ELAINE KENNEDY (D): Hello. My name is Elaine Kennedy, and I am a member of the Public Interest Advisory Group. I just wanted to add one point to André's comments. Am I too loud? Too fast. Oh! Sorry.

I just wanted to add a comment to André's comments, and that is that one of the things that we are being very careful about is that our science must be peer-reviewed before we put it out to the public. We want to make sure that our science, that we are basing our results and our decisions upon, has been reviewed and so, therefore, is acceptable to other scientists and, therefore, more credible to the scientific community. So I just wanted to add that little bit too.

MARC HUDON (D): Henry, if you will allow us, we have another comment from Tom McAuley.

HENRY STEWART (G): Alright. Thank you, Marc.

TOM McAULEY (D): Tom McAuley, from the International Joint Commission. I just wanted to say that we are glad that you have done this survey and we consider it to be very important. The results that you have submitted were sent. There are people at the other end who are aware because they received them, as well as the co-chairs, as well as the Modeling Group. We wanted to keep this study as transparent as possible.

MARC HUDON (D): Okay, Tom. (no overlap between cassette sides #1B and 2A)

PETER SUSACK (G): … (inaudible) axis along the bottom. I believe that it is the last century. We have from 1900 in the lower left corner until 2000 in the right-hand corner. On the left-hand axis, you have the supply of water to Lake Ontario. As you can see, 1900 to approximately 1950, there was a steady decline in the supply of water. That is a singlemost, important factor in the levels of Lake Ontario prior to regulation. This is one of the reasons that you had a significant increase in front of your property. The levels that supply water, the system was decreasing, and thus the lake levels were on the lower side.

Around 1950, the dam came into play and then, shortly after, in the mid-1950s, you had that second fight or draw, and again we has some near record low supply. Again, that provided for very low levels on Lake Ontario.

Regulation has an impact on the water levels that you see, but the overriding factor is the supply of water to the system. Now, since the mid-sixties, the supply of water to the system has been steadily increasing, as you can see on the graph, until the spike that we have near the change of the last century. So one of the biggest factors, and the reason everyone is talking about the high levels in the last several decades, is not because there is a conspiracy for higher levels, not because the lake is being regulated, as Doug mentioned, higher for shipping. There is simply a lot more water in the system. It is a natural process. It is related to the global climate factors and measured scale of climate factors, and that is one of the biggest reasons for the fact that you have seen less beach in front of your property.

There are other factors related to sand and the occurrence of the sand, and one of the unfortunate ones is the development… construction is showing protection structures. The

more people armour their shorelines, the less erosion there is, and the less sand there is available to build beaches. So there is a give-and-take situation there.

As we develop the shorelines and more of it goes from agricultural land to residential, the value will increase and people want to protect their land. The impact of that, though, is that there is less sand available in the system to build beaches, and that is one of the unfortunate things that we are seeing on this lake. It has been going on quite extensively on some of the other lakes, like Lake Erie now, for quite some time.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Pete. And then Doug Cuthbert.

DOUG CUTHBERT (G): We in the Study Team have had (inaudible). We are very much aware that one of the reasons for the study is the concern in this area of Lake Ontario, of shoreline erosion and the loss the shoreline, and the stretch to building. That has been loud and clear. And probably they are looking for that and (inaudible).

The regulation plan, right now, asks to keep the levels lower than they actually would have been. With the (inaudible) that you see up here, it shows what the levels are actually, in red. If there was no regulation, there would be… the line would be blue. So the regulation plan has acted to lower the water levels, the high levels that you had, and, on the other side, it has decreased low levels.

The question is: Do we use the control dam to the degree that they are able to lower them further? Is that a solution to the problem?

Well, firstly, it would have repercussions on many other interests, but it would, in the short term, probably reduce the levels along the shorelines.

In the longer term, it depends on the nature of your shoreline. Your shoreline may be eroding, on a long-term basis, regardless of what the water levels are. I would suggest that, with the information that Pete Susack and the study has now, there is an ability to understand what is happening in this shoreline, in the Rochester-Greece area, in a way that we have never had that ability before. The technology and the (inaudible), the understanding of the (inaudible) has been advanced by the study, to know what is going on.

Now, what the solutions are, there is a range of different solutions, but think that n understand what is happening on the shore.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug. Doug Wilcox of the Environmental Group.

DOUG WILCOX (G): Thank you, Henry.

I have just two comments. I agree with the things that Pete has said and what Doug has said, but I have a perspective on this.

The Control Board, right now, is doing what it is required to do, following the current regulation plan. The reason that we are here tonight is that, if there were low supplies, the Control Board is going to try to keep the water high. If there are high supplies, they will try to keep them low. They do not have the ability, under the current plan, to do something different than that.

The purpose for this whole $25 million study is to generate a plan that will allow the Control Board to do something different if they see a need to do it to protect in the interim, and that is very critical.

I would like to add to what Pete said on the supply curve. We have done work on the Upper Great Lakes, looking at climate change through history, through paleontological methods, and we had an over-4,000-year record of lake public history.

What you are seeing there (inaudible) is the supply of water that has been going on, a natural (inaudible) that has been going on for thousands of years. So we have to deal with that. It is the supplies of water coming into the lake that drive lake levels, and we cannot change it.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug Wilcox.

Does anyone else have any comment about the same subject? Frank Sciremammano.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): I think that the other speakers have covered it pretty well, but I wanted to talk about the immediate situation, from the Control Board point of view.

We are well aware of what is going on and we know that the remnants of the hurricanes out in our water, we had a cool wet summer. We are now about 10.5 inches above the water level average. We are meeting next Tuesday and Wednesday, and we are going to look forward about six months. The last time that we did that, and the last two times we did that, the critical period was in the fall, when we thought that we would give extra water to Montreal, and now we have extra water.

So my anticipation is that we will have a discussion next week and, if this takes place, hopefully, providing some relief so that they will not have a problem next time. So that deals with the immediate situation.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Frank.

Does anyone else have any comment or follow-up with respect to that issue? Alright. Marc, we are ready for you next.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you very much, Henry. Can you hear me?

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes. Thank you.

MARC HUDON (D): Okay. We have a gentleman with a question.

PAUL MORIN (D): Hi! My name is Paul Morin. I am the Regional Director of the Department Food and Fisheries for the Government of Quebec.

It is our responsibility. Regionally, we are based in Nicolet to put out commercial fishing licences, as well as the development of commercial fishing along the river.

One of our concerns is to know whether there has been a study made on the impact on water levels, on spawning sturgeons and other species that reproduce in the river and near the shores, near Lake St. Pierre, in particular, and other shores of the St. Lawrence River.

Have we evaluated the impact on commercial fishing in the river corridor with regard to water levels? Is it possible to invest money to study this?

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you very much. Well, we have someone who will answer that question for us so state your name.

SYLVAIN MARTIN (D): Sylvain Martin, Diamond Canada.

Yes, we have developed the models for the estimate and the habitats for the different species. With regard to reproduction, there were certain species on which we have concentrated, such as the pike and perch. There has been a lot of energy put into estimating the reproduction habitats for these species.

So no effort has been made, in particular, for commercial fishing, but that is it. We have made some studies. The model works pretty well, and we collaborate with other groups so it is being developed. We are always in a back-and-forth type of communication with these other groups.

MARC HUDON (D): And other comments from Mme Christiane Hudon?

CHRISTIANE HUDON (D): Thank you, Marc.

Above and beyond the studies that have been made and that we discussed recently, which is to destroy the habitat of certain fish species, we have also done some studies on the recruiting force of the large pike in different areas, and certain spawning groups at Rivière-aux-Pins in Boucherville, among others, in other to correlate water levels with the different pike stages of development. We have also done some studies from Quebec and Bernière that will give us a 30-year study of the abundance of different fishes. We have noticed the abundance.

We have been able to relate the success of different species according to water levels. Finally, this work, these various studies have become the basis… form the basis for the elaboration of different factors and indicators that have come into play in different models and projections that have been made.

With regard to commercial fishing, as mentioned, we did not give an particular attention to the commercial aspects. That is indeed something that we should look into.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Christiane. Are there other comments on this same point? Okay.

Alright. Yes, there is someone who wants to make a comment on that same subject.

CLAUDE MARTIN (D): Claude Martin, Zip Ville-Marie. It is not as much a comment. I am happy to learn that there are studies that have been made, but what do those studies say?

CHRISTIANE HUDON (D): Now, the studies on the various fish species tell us that, in those years where we have a lot of water influx into the water, we have a very strong growth and abundance of fish.

So those are studies that come in support of all that has been observed in the big rivers, where we have a floodable plain area, and so the more water flows in, the more fish can access a larger habitat, and the more the younger of these species have success and can survive to the adult state.

So the productivity of wetlands and fish habitats is connected to the spring water influx into the system and natural fluctuations of water levels, as we can observe throughout the world.

Do we need to have a raise of water levels in the spring and then a lowering of the levels towards the end of summer, the hydrology system where we have variations throughout the year.

The performance indicators are going to be developed to underline the importance of those different hydrological factors on the recruitment of different fish species. Thank you.

MARC HUDON (D): Are there any other comments on this same subject? Otherwise, it is back to you. Are you there, Henry?

HENRY STEWART (G): Here. Any follow-up in respect to that issue?

So now we can move on to another question. Thank you very much.

ROD LOWE (G): My name is Rod Lowe. I am a lakeshore resident.

My question is: When it comes to regulating lake levels, is it equal or unequal weight to the various stakeholder interests? The ones that I am thinking about are how our environment, coastal repair and shipping and recreation.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you. That is a very good question. I think that it gets at the heart of a lot of the issues that the Technical Working Groups are working on, both together and individually, and Gene Stakhiv, the U.S. co-lead, would be able to answer that.

EUGENE STAKHIV (G): There are two parts to that answer.

One is that we are developing the longer-term, new, operating rules, both the criteria and the flows, which would give more or less equal weight to all of the interest groups, including recreational boating and shoreline. Because, right now in the law, in the orders of approval, there are really only three purposes to which the Control Board should be giving consideration.

But the Control Board itself, in the actual decisions week to week, the day-to-day decisions actually do give weight to all six factors, which is why you have plan 58DD, with deviation, and, in fact, they deviate considerably, probably 50% of the time, from the actual rules of the game, to take into account recreational boating, shoreline, shoreline damages and even the environment. In the new plan that we are developing, all six purposes will be given equal weight.

The economics? Well, you saw one of the first. The first guideline that we had there was that we would develop plans that are environmentally sustainable and that produce the greatest economic benefits as well.

HENRY STEWART (G): One circumstance that I have had occasion to observe, as a member of the Public Interest Advisory Group, is that in the economics of valuing the various aspects of benefit or loss, there have been issues that have come up, with respect to how does one value loss of a property owner's land, versus how does one value loss of certain aspects of how much shipping weight can be put on in terms of a load onto commercial navigation and all that, and how does one determine how did that make it legitimate, accurate and competitive between what those losses are.

I have been particularly interested in how the economic team has looked at that, how the various Technical Working Groups have looked at it to try to be very conscientious about that. I think that that might have some bearing on answering the question as well.

Does anyone else have anything to respond or to add to what Gene has mentioned? Is this a follow-up to that issue?

JAMES QUICK (G): Yes.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you.

JAMES QUICK (G): I am James Quick of Lowquit(ph) New York, a riparian and there since 1957.

A couple of years back, John Cangus(ph) from the Core of Engineers came to visit me and saw our problem I am hoping that the people on the Study Group will also come and see each one of these individual problems along the way.

We have a problem on the south shore of the lake because we have predominant winds from the northwest. Obviously, that does not affect the Canadian neighbours up to the north. We used to get relief from Toronto, back in the fifties, when we would have a south wind from about three days and there were three million boaters up there.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you very much.

Are there any other follow-up or responses with respect to that issue, question?

Pete Susack from the Coastal Processes Group. Thank you, Pete.

PETER SUSACK (G): I think that, just to respond to the question of erosion, and it was expressed earlier by the other gentlemen, as far as what we have done in my group.

The Coastal Group has been addressing these issues of the privately-owned parcels along the lake. One of the things that we have done was that, last summer, I personally flew around the lake in a helicopter and I saw everybody's property around the lake. So we are very familiar with the issues that you have. We have studied your problems extensively in the field. We have taken measurements. We have used computer tools, the best available science, to understand why the shoreline erodes, what drives that erosion, primarily the storms and the wind-driven waves, and we have made recommendations. You saw the black line earlier.

If you look at the line of the criteria, you will see that the black line there, it has huge elevations in the flow. One of the things that we are recommending, starting with this

January at the beginning, on the left-hand side, that is our upper level, the upper threshold, and that is close to two feet lower than the current operating range.

So we are making recommendations and trying to make great strides forward to recommend levels that are going to be lower than the current operating range and will provide some relief for shoreline erosion. So there has been a tremendous effort going into that issue. I want to make that clear.

The levels that we are recommending, half would increase in the summer when the supplies are coming up. In May through August, we have more relief for higher levels because there is less storm activity.

So we are giving different levels at different times of the year to account for the storm activity, and we are trying to make recommendations that will help give some relief to the shoreline erosion problem.

HENRY STEWART (G):): Frank Sciremammano from the Study Board.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): I just want to point out, and maybe Dan can help me with that point, that the recommendations coming out of this study, in terms of the coastal, is that, right now, the upper limit is 347.3, roughly, throughout the year, upper limit regulation range.

So, basically, the Control Board is mandated to plan to try to keep it below that through the year. We see that already we are getting into recommendations (inaudible) recognition of the problems that are on the shorelines, that that should be lower, especially during the storm phases. So that will be factored in, along with all the other requests.

So there is a response to the issue. There is an understanding of the issue. This is what the science tells us, in terms of (inaudible) factors in and what the final outcome will be (inaudible) over the next year.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Frank Sciremammano and also Pete Susack. Doug Wilcox, from the Environmental Technical Working Group, has a comment.

DOUG WILCOX (G): There is another component to the erosion. It is not just high water levels and storm events, but it is rebuilding the shorelines, and shorelines naturally, in all the upper lakes, during the low lake level periods, sand comes ashore and it not only recreates beaches; it recreates dunes. So we need to have occasional low lake levels in order to do that.

The regulation plan, along with a period of high supplies, does not allow that to happen. If you have low supplies in the future and a regulation plan that allows lake levels to go low periodically, the shoreline property can eventually rebuild (inaudible), provided that they have a lake supply suddenly to do that. We need a plan that will allow that to happen.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug.

Any other comments? Yes, sir.

RAY MACK (G): Ray Mack, M-A-C-K, from Hamelin.

As part of the study, will you be sharing this with the Army Core of Engineers and the DEC? Because, if the result of this comes back that many of the property owners are not happy, we are going to need permitting in order to protect our property. Okay?

Now, will this go to the Army Core of Engineers or the DEC, with an emphasis to say: We have decided to put it at this level and expedite permitting because, if anybody has permits, in here or in the past, they could take upwards of a year and you can watch a lot of your property erode, your homes and so forth.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you. Doug Cuthbert.

DOUG CUTHBERT (G): Thank you for that question. Doug Cuthbert again, Co-Director.

There is a member of the Board who is from the New York DEC so the DEC has been plugged in right from the beginning, but there have also been discussions with DEC to provide the information. Susack has described it. They are looking at a coastal (inaudible)

From my perspective, I would like to see all of that information made available to the DEC, as well as to the province of Ontario, those agencies that are responsible for permitting, so that they can take advantage of that fact.

Now, the challenge is to make it happen effectively, but that has been (inaudible).

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug. Dan Barletta.

DAN BARLETTA (G): You all know me.

I just wanted to mention your comments. I have gone through the same thing. These gentlemen earlier said it, and I said the same thing, hopefully, this afternoon. They have been there. They are getting it, and they are going to keep getting it from me personally until the study is up.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thanks again. Gene Stakhiv.

EUGENE STAKHIV (G): You can only beat this dead horse.

We had a meeting just last night. We had representatives from the DEC, with the Core of Engineers, discussing these various issues and telling them that the results of the models, all of this information, should be plugged into the decision-making. Well, they are aware of it, but it always takes time. As any bureaucracy, it will take time before it finally penetrates, but we have initiated the process and we have a couple of persistent fellows who are very interested in making sure that this happens.

There is another program that the Core has, that you need to be aware of. It is called the "advanced measures program".

If we know that we have very high lake levels, and there is a lot of water coming in, and we are entering into, let us say, the stormy winter season, you can actually ask for an expedited permit to build up your shore protection, but you have to demonstrate that the conditions are going to be extraordinary.

That has been invoked several times over the past decade that I know of. The high fluxes, and they had - I think it was in 1997 or 1998 - so that is another program that you could use. And you could turn to the Buffalo District for assistance on that. We have a representative here from the Buffalo District, Tony Eberhardt.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Gene.

If I might, Marc, just interject one question that was left with me by an individual who had to leave because it does follow up, with respect to this topic, and it may just be quickly addressed. It was addressed, in part, by Gene's answer, but a woman by the name of Mary Boelkl, B-O-E-L-K-L, from Edgemire Drive in Greece, asked the question: When a plan is finalized and whatever plan that may be, if adopted, will the public be made well aware ahead of time, for example, as to which years there might the greatest high level or the least low level so that the public, particularly property owners, can plan for that high level or low level and be able to know the reason for such to come about?

That follows, I think, with what we were talking about until I interjected now. If there could be an answer to that.

DOUG CUTHBERT (G): Doug Cuthbert again.

There is no reason why not, but I guess that, jumping ahead a bit into the operational side of it, but that is something that I would expect that we would be able to address and recommend in the interest of efficiency (inaudible) cost.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug.

Any other responses? Is this a follow-up to the same topic?

If we could return, we really need, in fairness, to return to Dorval, Canada, to let them ask a question and then you can be next after that.

Marc, in Dorval, can you hear us?

MARC HUDON (D): Yes, Henry. We have a comment on this same subject before we go to another question.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thanks.

ELAINE KENNEDY (D): This is Elaine Kennedy from the Public Interest Advisory Group. One of the things that we, in the Public Advisory Group, have discussed is the idea that we would make recommendations to the Control Board about their communication plans. So, therefore, one of the things that we definitely recommended was some sort of way of communicating better with the public and, hopefully, that lady's concerns would be addressed in a better communication plan for the Control Board.

MARC HUDON (D): Henry, we have a comment from another person.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Marc.

ANDRÉ CARPENTIER (D): Yes. Just following on that, André Carpentier from the Control Board this time.

I just want you to know that we are doing, right now, some forecasting of levels that we are expecting, but the big issue of that are the uncertainties of the water supplies. The U.S. Core of Engineers and Environment Canada also gave us some forecasting for the next three or four months, but you can see that there is a range of levels where we can be, that everything depends on water supply.

So, even with the new plan, we can again do better communication, but always with levels that will fluctuate between, you know, high supplies and low supplies. I do not think that we can expect, in the next plan, that we will have, I would say, a 100% forecasting horizon. Mother Nature will still be the leader.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, André.

Any other comment on that same subject?

SERGE ST-MARTIN (D): Serge St-Martin, of the Recreational Boating and Tourism Technical Working Group.

I would like to ask the people in Greece: What is really the level that you would like to have? Is it something like 220 feet?...(laughter)...

Because I have been hearing about too high, you know, that the levels are much too high, but, if you go down, and I am quite sure a lot of people would like to see 220 feet, then how far away would you have to walk to your boat? ...(laughter)...

MARC HUDON (D): Any other comment on this particular point?

Otherwise, I guess, Henry, we will go with our next question if there is one, or if you have a comment in the room or another question. Does anyone have a question? Yes.

LUC BERGERON (D): Luc Bergeron. I am from the priority inter… (no overlap between cassette#2, sides A and B) …for the environment and pleasure boating and the other elements that you have mentioned, there is one observation or a question that came to mind, in my mind.

Since the end of the seventies, we have seen that the levels drop, year in year out, so this is a drought basically. So this frees up some shoreline that is under the influence with the pressure of some contractors and, I mean, people have been asking for construction permits in zero to 20-year levels.

So your forecast for water levels for the next 20 years, will they be even bona fide if a high level creates damage to those houses that have been built in the zero to 20-year areas? I mean, some houses are built there because the flood maps have not been defined yet so nothing keeps a township from building there.

Another question: Are there any maps that allow you to see the impact of these houses in these potential flood plains to know the impact or the damages that might be caused?

So that is my question. The high levels that you have defined for the environment, do they take into account these houses that have been built illegally possibly? I apologize for that word. There are some in Lake St. Pierre and some in Montreal even. So that is the question that I would like to ask.

MARC HUDON (D): So can anyone give him an answer?

BERNARD DOYON (D): Well, yes. Hi! Bernard Doyon. I work for Environment Canada. I worked on the flood plain issues.

So all that I can say or all that I can respond is that the position of each property or each house is known. Well, first, we established the 100-year flood plain and the 20-year flood plain. Afterwards, we have identified each house in these two flood plains and this gave us a magnificent total of 5,000 buildings of all sizes and shapes, whatever, that were built in these flood plains.

Now, the way that we are going to work to establish the performance indicators is that we know the municipal evaluation of each of these properties so that, if ever there is a flood, well, we have established some curves of local damage applicable to the whole portion for those dwellings in the river portion.

So, with these anticipated levels, we are able to estimate damage on each property. These results were compiled at the municipal level so that, for a given water level at each hydrometric station that you will find in the river, we are able to state what damage there will be to the buildings in each municipality.

Now, these are the performance criteria that have been established. I do not know if it answers your question because this was in a legislative framework.

MARC HUDON (D): Christiane, do you want to say something?

CHRISTIANE HUDON (D): Well, I am Christiane Hudon from the Technical Environment Working Group. I work for Environment Canada.

In the greater Montreal area, there was a net loss of 80% of the wetlands due to urban sprawl eaten away, year in and year out, for residential construction. We now see that, at each low level period, we can see an increase of this sprawl because people simply take over the available shoreline. We build a cottage, and then, when the water levels are too low, we increase the size of the cottage and eventually you build foundations. At some point, the cottage becomes a second home, and eventually a first home.

So the people, who built in the flood plain, know it. They know they are taking a chance. It is a chance they are taking. When the river will take over its rights, as we often see in the case of important floors that occur each spring, well, people are flooded out and they complain. And it is understandable because we have acquired some rights that we have tried to take from the river, but, eventually, the river will take back what we borrowed from it; "borrowed" is the word.

I want to emphasize the fact that the coastal owners have taken over some rights and they demand that the levels be regulated on the low side to avoid their being flooded. It is their property, it is legitimate, but the wetlands do not vote. They are not asking for anything.

They are not claiming anything. This is what we see everywhere along the shores of the river, and this is the trend, due to the fact that water levels are lower and lower, and soon we will have a magnificent river with cement walls on either side and no longer any wetlands.

Thank you very much.

...(applause)...

MARC HUDON (D): Back to Luc Bergeron again.

LUC BERGERON (D): So thank you for the comments and the answer, but I would go further.

This raises the issue of responsibility and the value levels that you have established. Who will be responsible for them, knowing that Quebec public safety washes its hands each year of the funds that they have to compensate riverside properties? So what is the solution? What is the avenue that you have imagined between the criteria to protect the environment, on the one hand? Who will be responsible? Will the municipalities? Are they aware of all of that? Were they made aware?

The second thing that I would say: What will we privilege, between the environment and you have a criteria of flexibility or of elasticity in your presentation? So what will decide which has priority?

BERNARD DOYON (D): Well, I cannot speak to responsibility. What I know about the law - and I do not know much - is that, in the zero to 20-year zone, there is a plan that exists, but, to my knowledge, there are no new buildings in that area. I mean, you have existing buildings, but no new ones, at least theoretically. There are some criteria or some rules of expropriation that have been dictated by the Department of the Environment that are fairly specific.

If a building has more than 50% damage and it is located in the zero to 20 flood plain, well, it is theoretically expropriated. I say "theoretically" because all that the owner has to do is no request for indemnity, and no one will bother him.

MARC HUDON (D): Henry, before we go back to you, we have one last comment probably on this same topic.

HENRY STEWART (G): Alright.

DENIS PÉLOQUIN (D): Denis Péloquin. I have worked with the Study Group on Water Use, but it is not for this group that I am responding. It is the work that I have done at Municipal Affairs in the past.

In fact, the municipalities are always aware that people are building on the shorelines. That is part of the game. There are some promoters who exert pressures so that these buildings can be built.

Unfortunately, I think that the situation was well described. Sometimes, many of these buildings are flooded out and, of course, then you try to get compensation. But, in general,

the municipalities are not able to supply these indemnities. So maybe the larger cities are able to compensate partially, and we hope that the state will do so. We know that the government in Quebec, the funds are limited and we have health problems, education problems.

So, when you have issues like that, the people who live in these flood plains will have to get used to taking chances. If they are flooded out, they will have to live with their flood without being compensated.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Péloquin.

Are there any other comments from Dorval? Okay. So, Henry, we go back to you.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Marc.

Does anyone have a comment to follow up that question? So is there any comment to follow up on this or any response from the Study Team? Alright.

I know that the gentleman in the back had a question. I do not know whether we could defer it for just a few moments first. Thank you.

JACK MORGAN (G): Jack Morgan.

I guess that the question that I have is that, when you have storms, all of a sudden, the lake rises up so fast. Why can we not let the water out of the dams? Why do we have to wait and have another study and get together? There ought to be a control. If the water level rises drastically within a week's period, like a foot or a couple of feet, they ought to be letting it out at the other end. I do not understand why that cannot happen.

...(applause)...

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you for that question. I believe that Frank Sciremammano, who is on the Study Board and, as he mentioned, is also on the Control Board, will be a very good person to answer that.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): I do not need that. Well, actually, I do.

That is a good question, and part of the problem is just (inaudible) the amount of water that we are dealing with. If, for instance, we want to get the lake down by two centimetres over the course of one week, and we are talking a lot more than that, but, if we wanted to do that in Montreal and raise their level by 30 centimetres, right behind the dam, which is in this area, the dam is sitting here, can we drop by 30 centimetres? The multiplier that I like to use is ten. Whatever we do on the lake, the effect downstream (inaudible). But, if we want to get a foot off the lake quickly, we are going to raise Montreal by (inaudible) during that same period. That is a bit of a (inaudible) What is going to happen? Two things. Slowly, so that we do not flood them out while we are trying to alleviate the situation up here. But the problem is just the amount of water in the (inaudible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER-M (G):): …(off mike comments… inaudible)…

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): That is a whole other issue. (inaudible)

HENRY STEWART (G): And, hopefully, since that answers that question quickly, we have another gentleman waiting to ask a question right at the microphone. Doug Dobson.

DOUG DOBSON (G): Thank you, Henry. The name is Doug Dobson, D-O-B-S-O-N. In addition to being the legislator that represents eight miles of shoreline, along Lake Ontario all the way down to the Genesee River, I also live on the Lake Ontario shoreline. My question is to the gentlemen that are Board coastal experts.

What is the expected outcome of waves that occur probably twice a day in the range of two to eight-foot high on ice wall or ice build-up along the shoreline at various levels, low levels and high levels? Would one anticipate that, at high level, with waves coming in twice a day in the range of two to eight foot, would be ice act as a battering ram on structures? And, at the low levels, would one expect the ice to act more as a claw and pull the shoreline and cause greater erosion?

I would be interested in knowing what the scientific and coastal expert viewpoint would be on the impact of constant wave action, with ice at various levels.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug. I know that Pete Susack, hopefully, heard most of that.

I do not know whether you heard all the question, Pete, enough to answer it with respect to the issue of ice formation as well as wave action.

PETER SUSACK (G): I will try and, if I do not hit it on the head, maybe you can reiterate and we will try it a second time.

My name is Pete Susack. I am with the Coastal Technical Working Group.

Ice, if it is thick enough and it is shore fast and it is sensitive, sitting on the near shore or on the shoreline, and it goes out a fair length, say 100 feet, it is definitely your friend in the wintertime because that ice will block the incoming wave energy from reaching the shore, from smashing into your sea wall and causing damage. So, if there is a significant volume of ice there, it is definitely your friend in the wintertime.

If there is a smaller volume - and I will not try to really define what small means because every area of the lake is different - the geology of your shoreline walls will impact how the ice interacts, or whether you have sand or bedrock or clay will have some impact on how that ice interacts with the waves.

There has been some literature that suggests that, in the spring, when the ice thaws, if it is shore fast and you have clay, for example, or you have sand, that parts of the bottom can be thrust up from the lake and carried off with the ice. There is a very small piece of literature on that and, quite frankly, our feeling at our company is that the benefits of ice far outweigh some of those occasions when it can be detrimental and actually scour out the bottom of the shores.

So, in the long term, ice is your friend. There may be some locations around the lake or on the river, particularly where there are flows and you have ice moving with the river current, where the ice chunks can scour out the bottom. But, for Lake Ontario, in general terms, ice is a good thing.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Pete. Frank Sciremammano also has a response to that question.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): I am not sure if it is a response or a clarification.

Doug, if I heard you right, it is another ferry question; is that right? What effect will the ferry weight - that is what you were saying - have on the ice formations?

PETER SUSACK (G): Well, I am more interested in knowing what the constant wave action caused twice a day.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): By the ferry, though?

PETER SUSACK (G): Well, alright, but I did not want to go there.
...(laughter)...

HENRY STEWART (G): The reason is that I think that we need to be very explicit.

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): We have had at least four people bring up the ferry tonight, and I was also handed a letter with some pictures. We heard it. I have heard it. I have gotten a number of phone calls, gotten a number of e-mails. We are going to see. If we cannot do it in this study, we are going to find out who is responsible for that and try to get to the bottom of it.
...(applause)...

That is all we can say. We have heard that the ferry is an issue. Just like you, we are frustrated on whom we actually talk to about that so there will be a follow-up on it, and I will make sure that we do.

PETER SUSACK (G): …(off mike comments…inaudible)…

FRANK SCIREMAMMANO (G): But, if we can do something, we will, and if not, we will find out whatever we can. But we heard you that the ferry is an issue.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Frank. Pete Susack, just a follow-up.

PETER SUSACK (G): There is a vast body of literature on fast ferry impact, both fast ferry from an engineering standpoint and the impact of fast ferries on coastal communities. So if, for example, you typed in your Web browser "fast ferry", there will be a vast array of literature there at your fingertips.

So there is a large body of scientific research on fast ferries. In fact, there was a conference that used to be held every year solely on fast ferry impact. So there is a lot of science out there, and some of that may help you as you try to address this issue.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Pete Susack.

Any other follow-up with respect to that issue? If not, we send it back to Dorval. Marc.

MARC HUDON (D): TThank you very much, Henry. We have a question.

NICOLE TRÉPANIER (D): Nicole Trépanier, member of the St. Lawrence Users Group.

I was hoping tonight to have been able to get hold of the preliminary reports that we have indicated previously. This is not possible. But I would like, first of all, to ask for the reports, once the reports have been collated or made public, that they be sent forth to the users of the St. Lawrence Group so that the different stakeholders, from different groups, can become aware of them, analyze them, and do what, I thought, I was going to be able to do tonight by coming here. Number one.

Number two, I would ask the representatives of the International Joint Commission to come and meet our group so that we may ask questions, make recommendations, as needed, and I insist on the fact that there are, through this group, that there is a fairly varied sampling of the different problems and positions, and you may be able to get then a fairly clear position of people affected by the St. Lawrence, so to take into consideration not just the human use, but the fauna and flora and the different uses.

So please take advantage of this platform that is being offered to you.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Trépanier. Is there a comment on this request?

TOM McAULEY (D): Yes, thank you. We are going to try to set up a meeting within four to five weeks - Tom McAuley is my name - with technical experts as well, and it will be a loose-all meeting.

NICOLE TRÉPANIER (D): …(off mike comments…inaudible)…

TOM McAULEY (D): Well, the reports, as soon as they are ready, but you can have access to the shared vision model with all the data that is included at this point, and you will be able to compare. This is what we wanted to do, but we have not had time to make models of your data and to compare them for you. But that meeting will be the beginning of a joint analysis.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you, Tom. Are there any other comments on this same subject?

LYNN CLEARY (D): Lynn Cleary of the Study Board.

The report on the third year of study does give some partial information and there is a revision of the literature that was consulted in order to draw up this report. The whole thing should be made public within what? - three weeks, something like that, four weeks, maybe a month.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you for this further information. Are there any more comments on this subject? Alright.

Back to you, Henry. Scotty, beam me to Greece.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Marc.

Does anyone have a question at this time from this audience? If not, I know that one individual who had to leave passed a note to one of the other questioners and it has been brought to me. I could read it to you.

The individual's name is Bonnie-Anne Braithe(ph) of Kendall, New York.

She says: "My name is Bonnie-Anne Braithe and I live in Kendall, 22 miles from where we are now here in Greece.

"I have owned property on Lake Ontario since 1978. We have not been able to swim in Lake Ontario for several years due to the pollution. Are any of your environmental studies related to a clear lake and, if so, what is the outlook for a cleaner lake?"

I know that our particular Study Team is working with respect to lake levels and flows as compared with issues with respect to cleanliness, but I also realize that they go hand in hand to a certain degree, although I do not know that much about the issues of the environment, but I believe that Doug Wilcox might wish to address that.

DOUG WILCOX (G): You certainly have a legitimate concern. We had to focus on the study on lake levels. All of our studies are directed to environmental issues that are directly controlled by the lake level. There are some correlations between water quality in some areas that are related to lake levels, but, in the bigger picture, they are more driven by other factors.

So that is not part of this study. Doug Cuthbert has talked about it, and other people have talked about other issues. It needs to be addressed by other groups and in other studies. But we talked about that in the Environment Group considerably, and we envisioned potentially looking at some on mutually related issues, but, compared to all of the other things that were involved, they were a very minor component and not largely driven by lake levels. So it belongs to someone else.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Doug Wilcox, from the Environmental Technical Working Group.

I believe that Gene Stakhiv, the U.S. co-Lead, has a comment to make as well.

EUGENE STAKHIV (G): One of the confusing aspects of our system of government is that, at any given time, there are probably 20 studies going on in your area by various agencies, and the IJC, the Commission itself, has a Water Quality Board. There are lake area management plans and lots of studies going on having to do with water quality completely independent of our study.

Also, you have heard of the Core of Engineers' Navigation Study, the St. Lawrence Seaway Study, and many of these studies sort of deal with some common aspects, but our study essentially is just looking at the physical lake level changes and how it affects shoreline erosion.

Let me assure you that there are many studies going on about water quality at every waste water treatment plant. There are studies on the effects of septic tanks on the lake. But you will have to get that information from those people running those studies.

Doug made a good point. The reason that we are doing so much and putting so much effort into information management is that we are trying to make the information level, that we develop for our study, just $20 million worth of shoreline erosion studies and everything

else, available to all of the other institutions or all the other agencies, New York DEC. We are trying to get them plugged into our information.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Gene.

Does anyone else wish to make a comment about that issue and question? Ken.

KEN BUDINSKI (G): Ken Budinski.

Where are these data and how can we review them? I question some of these papers that I have gotten here tonight, and I would like to see the scientific studies and the data and review them myself. Where do we see these data?

For example, on the economics of the Seaway and the fact that the shoreline residents would like to see a 246.7 water level, where are these data?

ROGER HABERLY (G): I am Roger Haberly, with the Information Management Technical Working Group.

I would like to state that they are readily available online (inaudible). We do not have a necessity for going back through the reports that have been compiled, in the year two and year three, including them online, so that you do have access to it. It is part of the plans within the next three months. We are intending to have the data itself, the reports and any other analyses readily available. We are going to be delivering them via the Internet. It is the most expedient mechanism for us to be able to deal with that.

If you have particular concerns, particular geographies, particular areas or issues, please send an e-mail to the communications specialist. We certainly can get you the information that is available on the study, one case at a time. But, collectively, we are behind. We need a couple more months before all the information is put on the Web.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Roger.

If we can, I know there was a gentleman in the back. Did you have a comment about that as well before we have another question? Alright.

Pete Susack, again, has a response to that issue as well.

PETER SUSACK (G): Dan has asked me to maybe deal with a small part of your question, which is the threshold levels or the upper levels the coastal is recommending, and that was the black line that you saw earlier amongst all the other lines up on the graph.

As I stated earlier, in the summertime, it is about half a foot lower than the current upper range and, in the wintertime, it is close to two feet lower than the current upper operating range. So we have made great strides in trying to come up with levels that are lower.

Now, that black line, if you had to say what does it mean or what does it encompass, it is close to three and a half years of science, computers upon computers of data. There is a vast amount of information that has gone into that line, scientific data collected, studied in the office, desktop work. All of it has been peer-reviewed, as was mentioned earlier from the other side. We have a Peer Review Group that looks, not only at our science, but also

our economics as well. So there is a tremendous amount of work that goes into that line, a lot of science, and we feel it is the best available position for it.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Pete

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER-F (G): … (off mike comments …inaudible)…

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you. Any other comments with respect to that issue?

We should throw it back to Dorval before we follow up with another question, sir, but, Marc, is there another question up there in Canada?

MARC HUDON (D): Yes, Henry. We have a pretty good question from a gentleman.

FRANK EYRE (D): My name is Frank Eyre. I guess that I would class myself as recreational boating, although this issue addresses several other aspects.

At the time that the Seaway was built, well, things were as they were back in 1958. Now, there has been a dramatic increase in recreational boating. At the time that the Seaway was built, they used about a quarter of the area of Lake St. Louis as a dumping ground for rock. So that has made a quarter of the area of Lake St. Louis useless for recreational boating, and I would like to know if there is anything that can be done about that. It was the Seaway that created the problem? Does anybody have any comments on that?

Maybe there are other sections of the whole St. Lawrence area where this sort of thing has happened also.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you very much. (no overlap between cassette sides 2B and 3A)

FRANK EYRE (D): …it stinks.

MARC HUDON (D): Does anyone want to comment? Any further comments? I guess not, Henry.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Marc.

I believe that we have time for one more question here before we may need to terminate the general teleconference of this, although we would be available to stay here for anybody else who might have questions.

Sir, do you have a question to join in the teleconference? Thank you very much.

DOUG WILCOX (G): Since we have the people on line from Montreal, I just wondered how much fluctuation in a high water that Montreal can take without having significant damage? I know that… maybe could answer that question.

HENRY STEWART (G): Frank, would you like to answer that? Frank Sciremamanno.

FRANK SCIREMAMANNO (G): I cannot give you a specific number right now. We do have specific numbers that are alert levels for that area, and then the flood damage levels. There

have been situations just in my tenure on the Control Board where we have had water running down the streets of the suburbs of Montreal in order to help provide some relief by dumping some water. We try to, obviously, avoid that, but, when you have too much water, you have to kind of spread the misery, and sometimes we take a little here and they take a little there.

But we do know the number. I do not have it in front of me. There we go right there. Montreal Harbour, that is what they would like. We do have actual flood levels, though, and that may not correspond. Okay, so the alert level is the - well, again, this is above sea level so it is not going to mean much for us - 26.575, and then 28.215 feet above the sea level is where they are actually flooded.

So we know where they will flood, and the question is: Will we have a problem, where we need to release more? We can bump again to that. We are flooding and they are flooding, then it is a matter of spreading out the misery. We have been lucky and did not run into that recently.

Okay, 5.5 is the chart, so 5.5 meters. So you would see that, at about three-meter range that we can work in, so about ten feet, and that is about eight feet above where they are right now.

Thank you, Doug, for that.

HENRY STEWART (G): Thank you, Frank.

Is there any follow-up further to that question and issue?

I would ask, at this time, in this audience, whether anyone else would wish to ask a question before we may need to leave the teleconference part, if anyone desires to ask a question that would be shared with the Dorval, Quebec, Canada audience.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER-M (G): …(off mike comments…inaudible)…

HENRY STEWART (G): Oh, can you tell the exact geography there?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER-M (G): …(off mike comments…inaudible)…

MARC HUDON (D): Henry, we have a couple of comments before signing off.

HENRY STEWART (G): And we would be happy to stay waiting for those comments.

We have no further questions at this time here. So we will stay on to listen to the comments in question from you.

MARC HUDON (D): Thank you.

ANDRÉ CARPENTIER (D): André Carpentier from the Study Board and also from the Control Board.

I think that tonight we heard a lot of questions about high levels on Lake Ontario and why we do not dump the water down to the Montreal area, even if we have some room to get that.

I think that that is why we have a Control Board, with people all around the system, the Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, and I think that is why also we have a Study Board with a lot of people, again, all along the system.

If we want to do what the gentleman mentions, that when you have water, we dump the water down, then if we do not have water, what will we do? Just, you know, empty Lake Ontario or keep the water on Lake Ontario?

I think that is not the way that a big system like that should react. We should wait and look at what is happening, and not try to react as, you know, every time we have some water. I do not think that that is the way. I think that that is why we need to have some information, as we are getting right now, on each interest. I think that that is the way, I think, that that should be. I think that that is also a good example as to why we want to link people on the St. Lawrence, on Lake Ontario, in order that everybody interested in this system knows the interests that are on each side of the system.

I think that it is very important that everybody understand and take into consideration every point of the system.

MARC HUDON (D): Any other comments on this point? Are there any other questions? Henry.

HENRY STEWART (G): Yes, Marc.

MARC HUDON (D): I guess that I just want to say something in closing.

On the way, driving over this afternoon, I was listening to a damage report about what Ivan had done in the southern states. The reporter was saying that there was another one coming, and it would make Ivan look like chicken feed. They have named this new one coming, "Jeanne". I was just concerned that, if it is in relation to our "Gene", Canada may have to be evacuated!
...(laughter)...

MARC HUDON (D): So can you reassure us?

HENRY STEWART (G): I hope that Gene is still here. He is waving in the back. He seems quite friendly at this point. He said not to worry.

MARC HUDON (D): Alright. Thank you, folks. We will meet again soon.

HENRY STEWART (G): Are you still there?

MARC HUDON (D): Yes.

HENRY STEWART (G): Okay. Thank you, folks, for that aspect, with respect to the joining with Montreal. I know that Max Streibel will make some closing remarks.

I would just like to note, having facilitated this, that it might seem strange to have this teleconferencing, especially with the translation, but, as was said by Marc Hudon, another member of the PIAG, it was actually…

MARC HUDON (D): We have just lost the link-up.

CLOSING REMARKS
BY MARC HUDON

MARC HUDON: So I would like to thank you for having come this evening. I want you to understand that, in spite of all the information collected by the Technical Groups, we cannot meet and answer all the demands and questions of the different users, but, if the studies and the decisions are transparent and everybody's interests are taken into consideration, we do believe that we will be able to reach a plan that will meet the needs of most people without anyone having to suffer unduly.

So we hope to come back next summer to explain the different possible plans and to gather your comments on each of those.

Until then, you can consult the documentation that is set out for you on the table in the back, and stay in touch with us.

Now, Claude Mailloux left, but he left copies of his report, the studies on the Regroupment of the St. Lawrence Users. If people want a copy of that, you are welcome to take one.

Those who are here and who did not sign the register on the way in, please do so.

If anybody else has any other comments, feel free to stay with us. There are people from different departments here with scientific minds, who can stay and help you and answer your questions.

Thank you very much. Good evening.

...The Session was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Transcribed from audio cassettes
provided by the IJC -
Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Study Advisory Group

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