

# LEVELER

E-Newsletter from the Lake Ontario Riparian Alliance

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Grassroots Public Advocacy for the Protection, Restoration and Conservation of Lake Ontario  
Beaches and Riparian Property

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## Lame Duck Cheap Shot!

**Definition of *Lame Duck*:** an official or official group continuing to hold political office during the period between the election and the inauguration of a successor; i.e., The US International Joint Commission Commissioners! The Commissioners, by their recent action, are stereotypical lame ducks. They are out of office soon, so they have taken actions that they will not have to live with!

LORA has not been able to follow any paper trail to find out whom in U.S. government approved this plan or if they did it properly!

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## Reduction of Benefits = Damages = Future Legal Action

The IJC is using semantics to veil their destruction of the south shore of Lake Ontario.

They started with a computer model that miraculously gave an annual benefits value of about \$28 million dollars per year that they say the south shore receives from the current plan of operation, Plan 58DD.

The Boundary Waters Treaty between the United States and Canada, which created the IJC, does not allow the Commission to purposely "damage" an interest.

The Commission is using a slight of hand and is calling the damages a "reduction of benefits", thereby not having to acknowledge the damages or, for that matter, provide a means to repair the damages.

This change in terminology, we at LORA feel, will only lead to legal action, when the damages do occur, whether with high water or with low water.

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## Calling Congresswoman Louise Slaughter

Dear Mrs. Slaughter:

In one of your form letters to one of your constituents, you stated that you were waiting for all of the federal agencies to finalize their deliberations and come back with their findings. Well, they have; and now your district stands to experience the most annual damages of the six Lake Ontario South Shore Counties.

**What are your plans to mitigate this?**

Sincerely,  
The Directors of LORA

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### **Wayne Supervisors': Plan 2014 will devastate Lake Ontario shoreline communities**

By STEVE BUCHIERE [sbuchiere@fltimes.com](mailto:sbuchiere@fltimes.com) , Finger Lakes Times, Updated Dec 9, 2016

LYONS — The chairman of Wayne County's Board of Supervisors blasted the decision by the U.S. and Canadian governments to adopt a plan that allows water levels on Lake Ontario to rise and fall more naturally.

Chairman Steve LeRoy of Sodus said Plan 2014, as it is called, will have a devastating effect on shoreline communities, including his town.

"There's no question that this is a travesty," said LeRoy, who noted that the six New York counties on Lake Ontario have been fighting the proposal for years.

He said "mass flooding will ensue and that was never considered."

Assemblyman Bob Oaks, R-130 of Macedon, agreed calling the plan "devastating news" and "government at its worst."

The controversial plan was ratified Thursday by the International Joint Commission, which advises both nations on managing the Great Lakes. It was released in 2014 but only recently won approval from both federal governments.

Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence levels are controlled partly by releases from a hydropower dam on the river. The commission says policies dating from the 1950s have kept levels too stable, degrading wetlands needed to filter pollutants and provide habitat for fish and other wildlife.

The new plan allows more variation.

LeRoy said those variations will result in both damaging flooding and devastating low-water conditions that could make getting a boat out of Sodus Bay impossible for any larger craft.

He said even under current level fluctuations, Sodus Point has experienced serious flooding, with "the loop" — a section of homes on the bay off the village's commercial strip — flooded.

Imagine, he said, if high winds come off the lake.

He said the plan has the potential to seriously erode property values along the south shore. LeRoy noted that nearly half of the county's taxable property comes from lakeshore towns.

"I have opposed the plan for Lake Ontario to change the lake level management plan, allowing higher highs and lower lows, because it will more often expose people along Lake Ontario in Wayne, Cayuga and Oswego counties to flooding

and property damage,” Oaks said in a release. “In other summers when there is low water, it will limit recreational opportunities and local businesses will also be hurt.”

U.S. Rep. John Katko, R-Camillus, also blasted the decision.

“I am incredibly disappointed with today’s announcement that Plan 2014 will move forward,” Katko said in a release issued Thursday. “This decision by the administration, made on its way out the door, will have a devastating impact on the shoreline, homes, businesses and vast agriculture economies of Wayne, Cayuga and Oswego counties. While I certainly support preserving our region’s natural resources and maintaining the health of Lake Ontario, I have long called for more thorough, objective research into the overwhelming consequences of Plan 2014 for our community and our local economy.”

Katko said he will “continue to work with all levels of government — including the incoming administration — as well as stakeholders and community members to pursue every possible course to ensure that our shoreline is protected and to mitigate the impact of this decision.”

LeRoy said Plan 2014’s benefits, which include helping to improve northern pike and muskrat populations by improving shoreline wetlands, are overstated.

Muskrat populations in the region are excellent, he said, as are northern pike. He said Lake Ontario is a “great fishery” and that “Lake Ontario is cleaner now than it has been in my lifetime.”

He said there are other ways to rebuild shoreline wetlands and marshes, noting work done in Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge, which he said is teeming with muskrats. A project by the Nature Conservancy in the Sodus Bay wetlands and marshes is designed to restore habitats that have been inhibited by heavy reed growth.

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## **Congressman Chris Collins Blasts IJC Approval of Plan 2014**

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Congressman Chris Collins (NY-27) released the following statement after the International Joint Commission (IJC) announced their plans to go through with Plan 2014.

“If the International Joint Commission thinks for a second that Plan 2014 will ever be fully implemented, they are sorely mistaken,” said Congressman Chris Collins. “I can guarantee you that I will do everything in my power to protect the taxpayers, homeowners and small businesses along the Lake Ontario shoreline that are set to be devastated by this bureaucratic disaster.”

“As long as I am a Member of Congress, I will fight to block any and all funding paths this plan needs to be implemented,” continued Congressman Collins. “Additionally, the incoming Republican Administration will know from Day One how important it is to eliminate Plan 2014 once and for all.”

Congressman Collins has voiced strong opposition to the IJC’s Plan 2014 since it was introduced.

- In September, 2016, Congressmen Collins and Katko met with staff members from the Council on Environmental Quality, the Department of Commerce, and the State Department to once again express their opposition to Plan 2014.
- In November, 2015, David Godfrey and Lynne Johnson joined Congressman Collins and Congressman John Katko (NY-24) in another meeting with State Department officials to denounce the plan.
- In March, 2015, Congressman Collins sent a [letter](#) to the House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs that requested language preventing the IJC from using any funding to implement the Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Plan (Plan 2014) for the 2016 Fiscal Year.
- In July, 2014, Niagara County Legislator, David Godfrey, and Orleans County Legislator, Lynne Johnson, joined Congressman Collins in a meeting with State Department officials to express their concerns.
- In 2013, Congressman Collins toured the Olcott and Wilson harbors with state and local elected officials to highlight the negative impact the plan would have on the Lake's shoreline and the region's economy.

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<http://www.loranet.org/> and <http://www.loranet.org/levelerarchive/pastissues.htm>