

An important Message from the Rideau Roundtable on the future of the Rideau Canal

Attached is a message from Marc Akhert who owns a successful cruise ship operating on the Rideau Canal and Trent Severn Waterway.

His message is self explanatory and the Rideau Roundtable supports his recommend actions.

However, we believe that while this message clearly outlines the problems which the proposed Government actions will create for the economy, **it does not address the potential for major impacts to the natural and cultural heritage of the Canal.**

Operating in the same manner as it did when built 180 years ago and using operating mechanisms designed by Colonel By, The Rideau Canal is indeed a unique historic site in the national system of Parks and Sites. Are there any other historic sites that can make the claim that they are used today for the purpose for which they were built? We all know the interest created amongst land-based visitors whenever a lockage is taking place. Can this valuable interpretive experience be replaced by signage as some would suggest?

The health of the Canal's wetlands is vital to the maintenance of water quality and fisheries habitat. Natural systems have adapted over almost 200 years to a consistent water management regime and some areas of the Canal rely on knowledgeable and reliable water management operations to maintain water levels during the season and minimize the potential for flooding during the rest of the year. Simply put, without the assurance of the availability of year round skills the possibility of serious consequences to natural habitats and human occupation exists and long term impacts to property values are inevitable.

The Rideau Roundtable is dedicated to maintaining the sustainability of the Canal from an economic, environmental and cultural perspective.

WE THEREFORE URGE YOU TO CIRCULATE THESE MESSAGES URGENTLY WITHIN YOUR ORGANIZATION AND ENCOURAGE YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO FOLLOW THE ACTIONS OUTLINED BY MARC AKHERT IN THE ATTACHED.

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