



Save The River[®]

Upper St. Lawrence RIVERKEEPER[®]

*Protecting the St. Lawrence River through Advocacy, Education and Research since 1978
...now and for generations to come.*

February 5, 2020

Dear Premier Ford,

At last weekend's **Save The River 31st Annual Winter Environmental Conference** in Clayton, nearly 100% of attendees expressed support and more than 50% of those attendees signed petitions (attached) to you and Governor Cuomo stating *"On behalf of Save The River's members and all of the Upper St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario riparians and businesses, we ask you to use your powerful and effective voice to request that the Seaway delay the opening of the Spring 2020 shipping season to allow the ILOSLRB to lower water levels to at least the seasonal averages. Making this request now, rather than later in the winter, would allow shippers to adjust their schedules and businesses to make arrangements for alternative modes of transportation for time sensitive deliveries of critical materials."*

As you know, the Great Lakes remain at historical seasonal highs during this winter season. Our River and Lakeshore businesses and homeowners cannot withstand another year of extreme high water resulting from the potential of high precipitation this coming spring and summer. We believe that the losses and damages sustained by the region's riparians and businesses are at least equal to, or greater than, the loss that shipping may sustain by a delay in next spring's opening. While there are environmental benefits to minimally higher seasonal water levels in wet years, the extreme high levels and long durations of 2017 and 2019 were much higher than were needed to be beneficial to the environment.

We also emailed the attached letter to Ms. Colleen Deacon, Governor Cuomo's central New York representative, with a suggestion about using rail to ship aluminum ingots to the Port of Oswego for the first few weeks of the 2020 shipping season. Since the train carrying aluminum ingots may have to leave from Canadian aluminum factories, anything you could do to facilitate rail shipment of a few weeks inventory to Port of Oswego would be a great benefit to people living and working on the Lake and River.

On behalf of Save The River's 1000 members and 15,000 followers and the riparians and business owners on both sides of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River, we urge you to take action to delay the spring opening of the Seaway to allow the ILOSLRB to get as much water as possible out of the system.

Sincerely,

John Peach
Executive Director, Save The River
Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper

Cc: Minister of Transport, Honourable Marc Garneau
Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
Honourable Mark Gerretsen, MP
Att - January 30, 2020 letter to Ms. Colleen Deacon

*Save The River envisions a healthy Upper St. Lawrence River that provides safe drinking water,
is home to a thriving range of indigenous species, and supports sustainable economic activity.*