



Quinte SailAbility

On behalf of the Quinte SailAbility Board of Directors, I am writing to inform you that we will not be running a 2019 season. While we knew that 2019 would be challenging we hoped to be able to make something work. In the end environmental factors have forced our hand. However this cancellation has allowed us to focus on the 2020 season as well as working on some renewal that is overdue.

While there have been many challenges to deal with this year the final tipping point were weeds and water levels. The high water levels in the Bay of Quinte have prevented us from moving our dock as we had planned. Moreover the weed challenges in our current location have prevented us from finding a way to have some sort of season in our current location.

CFB Trenton Yacht Club has been doing an excellent job in managing the weed situation in the harbour over the years. The regular use of herbicide in the channel and around the docks have kept the weeds down to the level we are accustomed to. However this year their permission to spray herbicide has not been renewed and they are transitioning to an aeration weed suppression system. These bubbler systems are proven to work and this should be a better solution without the use of chemicals in the marine environment. However they require several years to take effect and in the mean time the weeds will be significantly worse. We knew that in 2019 the weeds would be worse but they have turned out to be far worse than we imagined. There is no way that we could operate in Trenton this year and in fact the yacht club itself is facing significant challenges.

We have been in negotiations with Bay of Quinte Yacht Club in Belleville since we received this news in February. The weeds in that portion of the bay are significantly better both in the harbour and the sailing area. There is also a large sailing school that we can partner with in several exciting ways. The prospect of a move to BQYC opens doors that have never been open to QS. However record flooding has prevented us from moving the dock. We need to pour a cement pad where our dock will be located and this is currently under six inches of water. Moreover we need to be able to bring in a crane to set our concrete anchors for the dock and the ground is too unstable. Water levels should reach normal by late summer or early fall and this work can easily be carried out then but certainly not now.

As you know we have faced other challenges this year. Learning to manage QS without Fletch has been difficult. Also there is a significant instructor shortage and we cannot operate without an instructor. We were confident that if we could get the dock moved we could offer something this year. The rising water levels gave us hope that maybe we could operate where we are. But as any sailor who has gone to a regatta only to have inclement weather has found - sometimes the environment disappoints us.

Our plan for 2019 is to spend the summer preparing for 2020. Obviously moving the dock will be a large undertaking and we will certainly be able to complete that work late in the summer. Also we are aware that some of our fleet could use maintenance. We hope to take the resources that we would normally put into the season and focus them on renewal. We have recently welcomed Brett Lyons and Anne Freeland to the board and look forward to one or two more new members in the coming weeks. We are also talking about attempting to offer some social and educational events to maintain the community in the interim.

We know that for many of you this is hard news. We know that a move will be more convenient for some and less for others. We also recognize that some people will likely find other summer activities. Unfortunately we see no other way and we will simply have to move with the reality. Fletch and John grew Sailability from nothing. Fortunately we have an eighteen year legacy and a great community to build on. Our hope is that the challenges of 2019 will be a time of renewal that any organization would need after two decades of operation. Stay tuned and let us know if you'd like to get involved.

Sincerely,

Chris King, Chair
Quinte SailAbility

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