

International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB) Board Meeting
April 29, 2014

Summary of Discussion

Canadian Member Participants

Mike Goffin (Co-Chair)	Environment Canada
Gail Faveri	Environment Canada
Trina Rawn	Ontario Ministry of the Environment
Greg Chapman	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
Kiley Hanson	Local Member, Nestor Falls
Todd Sellers	Local Member, Minaki
Karen Cederwall	Local Member, Kenora

U.S. Member Participants

Col. Daniel Koprowski (Co-Chair)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Jim Stark (Incoming)	U.S. Geological Survey
Jeff Stoner (Outgoing)	U.S. Geological Survey
Mike Hirst	Lake of the Woods Soil and Water Conservation District
Lee Grim	Local Member, Rainy Lake
Charlene Mason	Local Member, Ely

Invited Participant

Kelli Saunders	Watershed Coordinator, Lake of the Woods Water Sustainability Foundation
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Commission Liaisons

Nick Heisler	Canadian Section
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Secretariat/Engineering Advisors

Kari Hauck (Outgoing)	U.S. Secretary and Engineering Advisor, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Scott Jutila (Incoming)	U.S. Secretary and Engineering Advisor, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Matt DeWolfe	Canadian Engineering Advisor, Lake of the Woods Secretariat
Andrew Liddiard	Lake of the Woods Secretariat
Diane de Beaumont	Canadian Secretary, Environment Canada

1. Welcome and Introductions (Co-Chairs)

Colonel Koprowski and Mike Goffin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance was taken. Colonel Koprowski chaired the meeting.

2. Status of Action Items (Secretariat)

The Board Website update was the only action item not covered under other agenda topics.

Decisions:

- Secretariat to develop plan for updating the Board Website pages, to include a CAG/IAG page, for Board input at its August 2014 meeting.

3. Water Quality Plan of Study (POS)

Informal consultations were held with the IAG and CAG prior to the Board's IJC appearance in Washington, D.C. The detailed CAG comments will be provided separately. In general, the document provides a good start but needs some structure (i.e. costs, jurisdiction, etc.).

There was some concern that "Rainy" was dropped from the title of the POS. Nick clarified that the title was defined by governments as a way to clearly define the scope of activities.

There was also concern surrounding the number of meetings planned during the IRLWWB basin meetings. Board member participation in the public POS meetings will be limited by their schedule. The POS team clarified that while the Board members are encouraged to participate, they will not be expected at every meeting.

Comments on the POS need to be provided to the POS team by May 15. The next version of the report is scheduled to be released for comment on July 15, 2014. The review period will be 30 days.

Decisions:

- Develop a detailed plan to include all IJC related meeting for the IRLWWB basin meetings. Nick Heisler will be the POC for the IJC activities.
- The secretariat will organize a conference call with POS team in mid-May to discuss comments on the existing version of the report.

4. IWI Projects

Four projects were discussed: 1. State of the Basin Report Update; 2. Seine River Temperature Project; 3. Status of Effect of Water Management Regime on Wild Rice Production; and 4. Status of Effect of Water Management Regime on Cattail Invasion into Wild Rice Stands.

Project number 1 is progressing as planned. The technical document should be ready for release at the end of May. The public summary version should be available, pending a 5-10 day IJC review, at the end of June. The Board felt that both documents should be released at the same time. In addition, both documents should be released prior to the 30-day POS comment period.

Current year funding has been approved for Project 2. The data collection period will extend from 20 May to 4 July and 1 week in August. The final report will incorporate the 2013-2014 data analyses.

Projects 3 and 4 have been approved. Jean-François Cantin and Jean Morin met with Peter Lee to develop a work plan.

Decisions:

- The technical and public summary versions of the State of the Basin Report need to be released together and prior to Water Quality POS public comment period.

5. Proposed Approach for Tracking and Reporting on Environmental Issues in Basin

Trina presented a summary of work to date for developing an approach for tracking and reporting on environmental issues. The first step of the approach is to find out who is collecting what information and then determine how it should flow to the Board and the IJC. Board members felt it was important that the information should be provided to the IAG/CAG for commenting prior to it being sent to the IJC.

Decisions:

- Check with the IMA to determine what work is planned.

6. Proposed Indigenous Groups Engagement Plan

The current plan is to meet with each community over the course of the next few years. Karen Cederwall, Al Pemberton, and Chief Klyne will help coordinate the best approach for each community. Kelli Saunders will provide the slide presentation developed during the Task Force meetings. Representatives of the Board will be present at each meeting.

Decision:

- The Board will extend separate invitations to Board activities to indigenous groups.

7. Rule Curve Evaluation

Ryan Maki provided updated spreadsheets on work progress. A delay in bathymetry data has led to delays in three other projects (see updated spreadsheets). The geodetic survey to resolve vertical datum issues has been added to the list of studies. This work is scheduled for fall 2014.

Geoff Smith is retiring from the NPS. Claire Kissane will take on Geoff's PM duties.

The Rule Curve Evaluation Statement of Work will be distributed for Board review. The review period will last 2 weeks. Upon approval, the SOW will be transmitted to the IJC.

Decision:

- The SOW for the geodetic survey has been provided for Board comment. Once approved, it will be transmitted to the IJC.
- The Rule Curve Evaluation Statement of Work will be distributed for Board review. Once approved, it will be transmitted to the IJC by the secretariat.

8. Update on Spring Conditions

Normal rainfall in May could lead to rule curve violation if the snow pack is still melting. The Flow Committee will continue to monitor the progress of the freshet.

Lee was participated in radio interviews paid for by Boise. The Lake of the Woods Secretariat and Mike Hirst assisted in preparation. The local members felt this activity went well and was of value to the community, especially since the snow levels across the basin were high.

9. CAG/IAG Update

The membership composition of the CAG was discussed. The Board agreed to formalize Indigenous representative participation in the CAG. In addition, it was agreed that the CAG should be comprised of more public members than Board members. Currently, there are 17 public members.

The CAG indicated concern about the cumulative impacts of ongoing and planned mining in the watershed. If this continues to be a concern, the Board should consider preparing an IWI proposal to study the impacts of mining in the basin.

The IAG has asked that the Board provide the IAG with specific requests to assist with work management. The IAG also suggested more public outreach to share the work that is going on in the basin. Mike Hirst will lead this effort.

The IAG will also seek representatives from the railroad and pipeline industries.

Decisions:

- CAG/IAG meeting minutes from March were accepted by the Board.
- From this point on, CAG/IAG meeting minutes will be provided to the Board for a two week comment period. If no comments are received, the minutes will be considered accepted.
- Charlene and Kiley's model for CAG membership was adopted. The model will be reviewed and adjusted based on lessons learned in the spring of 2015.
- Formally alert the IJC that the CAG has raised this issue.

10. 2014 Basin Meetings

The public meeting will be held in International Falls, the week of 11 August. Other meetings scheduled for that week include:

- IJC meetings in Shoal Lake
- State of the Basin report public meetings
- IAG and CAG meetings
- Rainy Rule Curve Evaluation Update
- Flow Committee meeting with the Companies
- Board Meeting
- Agencies Meeting

The possibility of a second meeting in Kenora, with representatives of the Board, was also discussed. This meeting would cover the progress on the Lake of the Woods Water Quality Plan of Study.

Nick volunteered to spearhead the timing coordination of all the IJC related activities in the basin during the week.

Decision

- The Secretariat will prepare a draft schedule for Board review.
- A call to discuss the Basin Meetings will be held on 8 July 2014 from 9 – 11 CDT.

11. Final Preparation for Appearance before Commission

The presentation was reviewed and accepted for the Boards' Appearance.

12. Roundtable

Personnel Changes:

Jim Stark has been appointed to the Board as the U.S. representative from the USGS. He is replacing Jeff Stoner.

Scott Jutila will replace Kari Hauck as the U.S. Engineering Advisor and Secretariat.

Lee Grim also plans to retire from the Board. He intends to stay until a replacement is identified.

Kiley Hanson requested additional discussion time during the next meeting to address CAG/IAG comments. A separate teleconference was recommended.

Decision:

- Water Levels Group will send a thank-you note to Rainy River Community College for hosting the Rule Curve Review meeting during the Forum.
- Next Board Meeting 8 July 2014, 9:00 – 11:00 CDT.
- The Secretariat will schedule a teleconference to discuss IAG/CAG comments prior to the August meetings.

13. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

Given the number of actions and the lack of time, it was agreed that a list of actions would be circulated to the Board with the meeting summary.