

Approved, December 21, 2007

MINUTES

**INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION
Executive Meeting
Washington, DC
December 4-6 2007**

The International Joint Commission (IJC) met in Washington, DC on December 4-5, 2007 with Acting Chair Brooks chairing.

COMMISSIONERS

Irene Brooks	Acting Chair, U.S. Section
Herb Gray	Chair, Canadian Section
Jack Blaney	Commissioner, Canadian Section
Allen Olson	Commissioner, U.S. Section

SECTION STAFF

Lisa Bourget	Secretary, U.S. Section
Murray Clamen	Secretary, Canadian Section
Kay Austin	Ecologist, U.S. Section
Frank Bevacqua	Public Affairs Officers, U.S. Section
Willem Brakel	Senior Advisor, U.S. Section
Valerie Brunette	Executive Assistant, Canadian Section
Antionette Cade	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Jim Chandler	Legal Adviser, U.S. Section
Mark Colosimo	Engineering Adviser, U.S. Section
Juanita Garner	Staff Assistant, U.S. Section
James Houston	Environmental Adviser to the Chair, Canadian Section
Nick Heisler	Senior Adviser to the Chair, Canadian Section
Tom McAuley	Engineering Adviser, Canadian Section
Greg McGillis	Public Affairs Adviser, Canadian Section
John Nevin	Senior Policy Adviser, U.S. Section
Paul Pilon	Engineering Adviser, Canadian Section
Russ Trowbridge	International Adviser, U.S. Section
Michael Vechsler	Legal Adviser, Canadian Section
Joel Weiner	Senior Adviser, Canadian Section
Ted Yuzyk	Senior Science Adviser, Canadian Section

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

Karen Vigmstad	Director
Doug Bondy	Executive Assistant
Richard Delisle	Administrative Manager
Bruce Kirschner	Physical Scientist

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Commission approved the agenda with the addition of several items to be included under Other Business as noted in these Minutes.

2. IJC 2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Commissioners provided comments on the most recent draft of the 2007 Annual Report.

3. LAKE ONTARIO - ST. LAWRENCE RIVER STUDY

Commissioners received a briefing on the status of governmental consultations and on information arising from those consultations. Commissioners noted the recent release of a report on the St. Lawrence River Seaway, asked staff to ensure that the report contains nothing that would conflict with the Commission's review of the Order and regulation plan, and asked staff to prepare a letter to those who mandated the Seaway study with observations from its review of the report. Commissioners reviewed issues with staff in preparation for further consultations with governments while in Washington, D.C.

4. ENERGY REPORT

The U.S. Chair of the International Air Quality Advisory Board reviewed progress with Commissioners in preparation of a Board report reviewing energy and environmental factors, including a preview of Board findings and recommendations; a final version may be available in February 2008. Commissioners confirmed that the report is a report of the Board, notwithstanding any Commission observations and suggestions, and noted that the Commission will still need to consider public release of the Board's report and possible Commission endorsement or forwarding of the Board's report.

5. INTERNATIONAL UPPER GREAT LAKES STUDY - INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW PROCESS

Commissioners were updated by staff on Commission-initiated plans for a peer review process to be conducted by outside organizations throughout the study and approved the draft Peer Review Terms of Reference.

6. CENTENNIAL OF THE BOUNDARY WATERS TREATY

Commissioners reviewed the status of various efforts leading to recognition of the centennial of the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty. Commissioners confirmed their intention to attend a May 2008 event at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Studies in Washington, D.C., and asked that staff provide appropriate briefing material in advance of that event. Commissioners provided further instruction regarding the striking of a commemorative coin, specifying that it should be the same size as other common coins (such as those from the Corps of Engineers), that the IJC logo should be larger and the print around it smaller, and that 1909 should be on one side and 2009 on the other side with print in an arch format. Commissioners requested that staff further pursue in the United States the possibility of a joint stamp, noted that lack of a positive signal in one country should not cause abandonment of a stamp in the other country, and declined to pursue internal production of U.S. stamps with the IJC logo as made possible by the U.S. Postal Service via the web. Commissioners agreed that staff should explore the possibility of a joint reception with the Great Lakes Fishery Commission at its 2009 annual meeting in recognition of the centennial of the Boundary Waters Treaty, and to decouple a spring 2009 commemorative event in the Niagara region from a fall biennial meeting.

7. STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

Commissioners agreed that the Commission should place primary emphasis on strengthening its ties with its closest international organizations such as the Great Lakes Fishery Commission and the Commission on Environmental Cooperation, some of which is already underway. Commissioners also provided comments on the proposed principles for international involvement and asked Secretaries to provide a revised draft for their consideration at the February 2008 Executive meeting.

8. NEARSHORE EXPERT CONSULTATION WORKSHOP

Commissioners were briefed on aspects of and comments on a draft report of a first Nearshore Expert Consultation Workshop held on November 19-20, 2007 in Dearborn, Michigan. Commissioners agreed to convey a letter to governments before the end of 2007 to include high-level recommendations from the draft report. A second workshop on nearshore issues is planned for March 12th & 13th, 2008, in Dearborn, Michigan. The full report of the first workshop will undergo an additional 30-day review by participants and will be utilized as background for the second workshop. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement Advisory Board Co-Chairs will develop a proposed strategy for further work to assist Commissioners in developing further advice to governments on nearshore water issues. Commissioners asked staff to develop a communication strategy for distribution of the final report on nearshore consultations after discussions at the Commission's April Semi-Annual Meeting, including consideration of inviting participation from the Great Lakes Border Caucus at future Commission meetings as a means of providing relevant information to political decision-makers.

9. 2009 GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT BIENNIAL MEETING

Commissioners were briefed on an amended staff proposal and agreed that the primary purpose of the 2009 Biennial Meeting should be to assist the Commission in preparing a 15th Biennial Report that will assess progress under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Commissioners noted resource implications of such a 15th Biennial Report and requested staff proposals on how the Commission might produce the needed draft. Pending a staff assessment on resource implications, Commissioners agreed to release a draft 15th Biennial Report, minus recommendations, prior to the Biennial meeting in order to invite governments and the public to comment on the draft report. Commissioners also agreed to convene a stakeholder forum as part of the Biennial Meeting and suggested possibly establishing a roster of organizations and posing questions to those organizations as a means of helping to develop the 15th Biennial Report. Commissioners agreed that staff should explore various venues in Windsor, Ontario, and make recommendations concerning location and resource requirements. Commissioners directed staff to move forward with planning the Biennial Meeting consistent with the amended staff proposal and points raised during discussion, including contact with the mayor, interaction with children and possible provision of material in advance suitable for inclusion in educational curricula, considering public access, continuing the practice of having an "open microphone" session, and holding Town Hall discussions prior to any dinner.

10. 14th BIENNIAL REPORT - PART A: SUMMARY REPORT ON LaMPs

Commissioners reviewed a revised draft report provided by staff and agreed to send the draft report informally to the two federal governments and the Science Advisory Board for review and comment, to incorporate comments received from the Health Professionals Task Force which reviewed the draft report at its November 29-30 meeting, and to review a subsequent draft.

11. HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TASK FORCE

Commissioners deferred consideration of the Health Professionals Task Force's 2007-2009 workplan and budget to its December 21, 2007 conference call. Commissioners noted a letter from the Task Force to the Commission stating its strong support for the release by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of its *Report on Public Health Implications of Great Lakes Areas of Concerns* and approved in principle a draft letter from the Commission to ATSDR, to be signed by the co-chairs, pending final review by Secretaries and legal advisers.

12. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHED INITIATIVE

Commissioners noted that the December 3 staff memorandum correctly reflected guidance provided by Commissioners participating in an earlier conference call with staff and approved revisions to the International Watershed Initiative principles as a draft to provide to appropriate boards for their comment. Commissioners also approved a proposed International Watershed Workshop on the implementation of the watershed concept and future direction of the International Watershed Initiative to be held in March 2008 with representatives of the boards and other relevant stakeholders, noting resource implications and that a small workshop may be more effective.

13. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. **Deferred Testimony.** Commissioners discussed testimony to the U.S. Congressional Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment regarding "Progress Toward Improving Water Quality in the Great Lakes," originally scheduled for December 2007 and now tentatively scheduled for early 2008. Noting that all Commissioners plan to attend, Commissioners asked staff to provide recommendations on making most effective use of Commissioners' time, including consideration of other briefing and adjusting the previously-prepared testimony to address nearshore issues.
- b. **Applications and References on the Web.** Commissioners considered further suggested changes to a document summarizing Commission application and references to be posted to the web and agreed to provide further comment regarding these changes shortly.
- c. **Recent Letter Regarding Twinning Initiative.** Commissioners were provided a copy of a December 3, 2007 letter from Dr. Zafar Adeel, Director, United Nations University - International Network on Water, Environment & Health, requesting formal endorsement by the Commission of a new initiative funded by the Global Environment Facility to build capacity for transboundary water governance in the African Great Lakes. Commissioners requested that staff provide more information on the organization, and also on resource implications for the Commission, prior to the Commission giving further consideration to the letter.
- d. **Pathogens and Parasites Monitoring Report.** Commissioners approved a draft communications plan, including a draft media release, regarding the release of the first Summary Report from the International Red River Board.
- e. **Recognition.** Commissioners noted Jim Bruce's attendance at the awarding of the Nobel Prize overseas and Val Adamkus' recognition as European of the Year and asked staff to prepare congratulatory letters for Commissioners' signature.
- f. **St. Mary-Milk.** Commissioners Olson and Blaney provided a brief update on the status of efforts in the St. Mary and Milk River basins.

Elizabeth C. Bourget
Secretary
U.S. Section

Murray Clamen
Secretary
Canadian Section