

International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB)
Industry Advisory Group (IAG)
Teleconference Summary of Meeting
March 25, 2015

The Industry Advisory Group (IAG) met via teleconference for its regular spring meeting on March 25, 2015 from 10:00-11:00 AM Central Time.

Present:

From the IAG: Mike Hirst (co-chair/MEETING CHAIR), Ron Brodigan, Mike Williams, Anne Williamson (sitting in for Frank Ongaro), Kim Jo Bliss,

From the International Joint Commission (IJC): Mark Gabriel, Nick Heisler, Wayne Jenkinson

From the International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB): Diane de Beaumont

Regrets: Dennis Brown (co-chair), Mark Hauke, Mike Hanson, Frank Ongaro, Joe Henry, Pete Shultz, Steve Piragis, Paul Schurke, Allen Hasbargen, Kit Hasbargen, Craig Halla, Lindberg Ekola, Brian Ney, Shannon Rawn, Cindy Strand, Bud Dickson, Gerry Cariou, Doug McCaig

1. Welcome and Introduction:

Mike Hirst welcomed everyone to the meeting and proceeded with roll call.

2. Review Mandates

The IAG reviewed the mandates of the Industry Advisory Group and the International Rainy – Lake of the Woods Board. The meetings of the IAG were also reviewed as this was the 5th meeting of the IAG since its creation in the fall of 2013.

3. Review IRLWWB's letter on mining to the IJC and the subsequent letters from the IJC to the governments

IJC Staff reviewed the letters with the IAG. Comments from the IAG included:

1. There is already a rigorous process in the State of Minnesota and Mining Minnesota is not in favor of adding another layer to this already extensive process.
 - a. Nick Heisler followed up this comment by providing more insight to the letter, by stating that the letters do not call for more levels of review, but what they ask the governments if a process exists to take these cumulative mining impacts into account in the current review process and how this information is utilized.
2. Accidents and improper management can still happen under strict environmental standards similar to Mount Polley mine disaster in British Columbia last year.
3. A question was asked with regards to the Twin Metals project in the Kawishawi Watershed as to what the timelines are for this project moving forward.
 - a. The project is currently under review.

4. Update on the Water Quality Plan of Study (WQPOS)

A brief overview was given on the Plan of Study. IJC staff discussed the process and what happens from here, as the IJC has made the recommendations to the governments to fund the Plan of Study. A response from the governments is not expected for a few months. Comments regarding the WQPOS included:

1. Mining Minnesota does not agree with the studies outline in the Water Quality Plan of Study that base scientific studies solely on hypothesize projects for cumulative effects of mining.
2. Mining Minnesota does not want to see more duplication in the permitting and environmental review and requirements for mining projects as a result of the WQPOS.

5. Review Report on High Water Levels in the Rainy River Watershed

The IAG reviewed the report. If there are any comments please have them in by the end of March. They can be sent to the IAG co-chairs and they will forward on to the appropriate entities. It was mentioned that many docks were being repaired currently as the ice is still good and the weather has been dry. It was stated that the newly formed Rainy Lake

Association has been actively involved with providing comments. There will also be opportunities for public engagement as the Rule Curve Review

6. Rule Curve Evaluation

A brief introduction was given for the rule curve review for the Rainy and Namakan and chain of lakes. There are around 20 studies that are evaluating the 2000 rule curve and comparing it to the 1970 rule curve. The studies are looking at habitat, ecology, socio-economic impacts with this change in lake level management in the Rainy system. There will be opportunities for public engagement as the Rule Curve Review takes place. One 18 month study will be completed to pull together the outcomes of all of the studies to then provide recommendations if there are any changes needed to the existing rule curve.

7. Roundtable

- IAG members commented that the Water Quality Forum was very good this year and is always a worthwhile event. It was also expressed that holding a face to face meeting at this event as in previous years would be valuable.
- The committee discussed meeting times and ways to communicate by distance, including the IJC SharePoint website for document sharing and webex for conference calls. IAG members expressed interest in utilizing webex technology to have presentations during conference calls to enhance the overall conference call experience.
- It was expressed that the Ely area experienced good tourism this winter due to adequate snow conditions and lack of snow conditions in other parts of the state of Minnesota.
- Next meeting will likely be in International Falls on 8/11/2015, more information to come.
- Minutes to come out in about a week.
- Any comments on the High Waters 2014 Report by March 31, 2015
- All comments from IAG members are welcome at any time.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.