

## MEETING SUMMARY

International Rainy - Lake of the Woods Watershed Board  
 March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Meeting  
 Teleconference  
 13:00 – 15:00 CST

### ATTENDANCE

#### PARTICIPANTS

##### BOARD MEMBERS

Michael Goffin (Board Canadian Co-Chair)	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Gail Faveri	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Greg Chapman	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Kiley Hanson	Local Canadian Member
Dennis Brown	Local Canadian Member
Todd Sellers	Local Canadian Member
Nolan Baratono	Local U.S. Member
Lori Dowling-Hanson	Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Suzanne Hanson	Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
Jim Stark	U.S. Geological Survey
Mike Hirst	Lake of the Woods Soil and Water Conservation District
Charlene Mason	Local U.S. Member
Shawn Mason	Local U.S. Member

##### INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

Nick Heisler	Canadian Section
Wayne Jenkinson	Canadian Section
Mark Gabriel	U.S. Section

##### BOARD ENGINEERING ADVISORS/SECRETARIAT

Matt DeWolfe (Cdn Engineering Advisor)	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Daniel Rokitnicki-Wojcik (Cdn Secretariat)	Environment and Climate Change Canada

##### OTHER

Kelli Saunders	International Watershed Coordinator
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#### ABSENTEES

##### BOARD MEMBERS

Colonel Koprowski (Board U.S. Co-Chair)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Al Pemberton	Red Lake Department of Natural Resources
Matthew Gouin	Local U.S. Member
Trina Rawn	Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Mark Lee	Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship
Karen Cederwall	Local Canadian Member

##### BOARD ENGINEERING ADVISORS/SECRETARIAT

Scott Jutila (U.S. Engineering Advisor/Secretariat)	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
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## 1. Welcoming Remarks and Introductions

Mike Goffin called the meeting to order, took attendance and welcomed new member Shawn Mason to the Board.

## 2. Review of Meeting Agenda, Status of Action Items and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

A discussion on providing letters of recognition to Chief Klyne and Jenny Moorman was added to the agenda under the roundtable. Action items were addressed in the same fashion as in previous meetings. Meeting minutes from the February 11<sup>th</sup> teleconference were approved with a change that was identified by a Board member.

## 3. Water Levels Committee

The Water Levels Committee provided an update on spring 2016 water levels. During the winter, water levels were within the middle of the rule curve band and the basin is currently experiencing higher inflows than normal (75<sup>th</sup> percentile [1-in-4 year high] to 90<sup>th</sup> percentile [1-in-20 year high] in some areas). Forecasted rainfall in the upcoming days could increase inflows and the timing of this increased flow is not in line with the April 1<sup>st</sup> rise in rule curves. In the short term, temperatures are expected to decrease slightly and the forecasted rainfall is expected to be an isolated event. Spring 2016 is experiencing an early melt and may result in a shift in the timing of inflows to March. Looking ahead, the seasonal forecast calls for warm and dry conditions because of the strong El Niño this year. Current base flows are higher than average and so there is the risk that if the dry forecast is incorrect and conditions are wetter than expected moving forward, that higher outflows will be required to maintain water levels within the rule curves. The Water Levels Committee will work with the IJC to determine a plan forward if necessary.

## 4. Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee

### Board to Approve Recommended Initial Committee Membership

A list of recommended Committee members was circulated prior to the meeting and there was a discussion on whether non-board members could sit on the committee. No one objected with this and the Board Canadian Co-Chair reiterated the recommendation that each Board member sit on at least one committee.

**Motion:** Nolan Baratono made a motion to approve the list of recommended committee members. **Carried.**

### Update on Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee Activities

The Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee (AEHC) has indicated that it intends to update the Board's work plan to reflect AEHC activities and deliverables. The Committee Co-Chairs are consulting with the IMA TAC to discuss future water quality reporting needs and involvement. The Committee also provided updates on naming leads for the Stressor Index IWI project (U.S lead Nolan Baratono) and the HPAB risk assessment IWI proposal (U.S lead Mike Hirst). As U.S leads have been named, the Committee is still looking for Canadian leads for these two projects. It was discussed that should a Board member act as a lead for an IWI project, that it is reasonable to assign some aspects of the project management responsibilities to their staff for assistance. Leads are responsible for helping coordinate, providing information, keeping

the Board updated on project status, receiving interim and final reports and providing information for the Board's annual reports and any IJC updates.

Greg Chapman indicated that he will act as the Canadian lead for the Stressor Index project and will consult with MNR districts to determine which district office could assist him.

Mike Goffin indicated that he will act as Canadian lead for the HPAB risk assessment project with the assistance of Daniel Rokitnicki-Wojcik.

## 5. Rule Curves Evaluation

### Study Update

The Rule Curves Study Board has been very active of late. They held a number of meetings during the week of the Forum most notably a public meeting and a practice decision workshop with advisory groups and the IRLWWB. This workshop introduced how the review and its supporting models work in an open and transparent way. The workshop was highly successful with lots of constructive feedback and questions. The Rule Curves Study Board and IRLWWB Water Levels Committee presented briefly and heard concerns and questions from the public in a public meeting. The Study Board was well represented at the Forum by giving a number of presentations on the evaluation process and specific scientific studies. The Study Board will be holding public meetings in the basin in mid-July to consult with the public and other stakeholders.

## 6. Board Annual Report

### First Draft of the Annual Report

The Board discussed the status of the annual report including any outstanding sections that required completing. A section on outstanding decisions/direction from the Commission was proposed however, Board members agreed that this would be better saved as content in the Board's presentation during the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting in April.

**Action:** Final comments on the second draft of the report are due to the Board secretaries by Friday March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## 7. Board Work Plan

### Board to discuss the draft table of contents and proposed schedule

The Canadian Co-Chair requested that the Board Committees update the current work plan to include with the Annual report, and endeavour to complete a draft work plan for the upcoming year to provide the Commission in advance of the Spring Semi-Annual. This way the Board can receive feedback from Commissioners on proposed activities.

**Action:** Mike Goffin and Daniel Rokitnicki-Wojcik will divide the work plan into sections for each Committee. Committees are tasked with updating the current work plan for activities completed in 2015/16 and to develop a second document for activities proposed for 2016/17.

**Action:** Secretariat to send out a Doodle poll for dates in May to hold a Board teleconference to approve the draft 2016-17 work plan and other business.

## 8. Engagement Committee

### Committee Update

The Engagement Committee (EC) will be meeting the day following the Board Meeting and so there are few items to provide as an update. The EC continues to seek new members. Mike Hirst is working with the IAG to develop interest in the group. The Canadian Co-Chair of the EC asked the Board if there is any other interest from members to join the Committee.

To help with Board communications with the public, the EC is requesting a point of contact for each of the Board's Committees. The EC is also working to develop an engagement database to track interactions with the public and other organizations and stakeholders. The EC will also be looking to develop its own SharePoint site as they produce material. The EC is developing orientation materials for new members with the assistance of IJC staff. New member Shawn Mason is interested in finding out more about the Board and welcomes any orientation material that can be created.

## 9. April 2016 Semi-Annual Meeting

### Preparing for Spring Semi-Annual Appearance

The Board's appearance before the Commission is scheduled for Thursday April 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:30-9:30am ET. The Rule Curves Study Board is appearing after the IRLWWB and the IJC liaison commented that Commissioners will be interested in the Board's views on the rule curve process and that they may ask questions on the topic.

In preparation for the presentation, it was suggested that since Board activities have been divided amongst 3 Committees that this structure be reflected in the presentation. Each Committee would be responsible for developing a few slides that would be supplemented with other information within the Board's Annual Report.

The Board also reviewed the draft bullets circulated by the secretariat to provide a brief overview of the Board's activities and accomplishments. The IJC is requesting the bullets by March 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Action:** Review Board overview bullets and provide comments and pictures to Daniel RW by March 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Action:** Board Committees to provide a few slides each of highlights to the Board Secretaries by March 25<sup>th</sup>.

## 10. August Basin Meetings

### Preliminary Planning

The Board agreed that the meetings should be held principally in Canada in 2016. There was support from the Board and IJC liaison for holding the majority of the meetings in Kenora during the week of August 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> and that public meetings would be held in other parts of the basin (e.g. International Falls and Fort Frances). It was agreed that time be set aside for the Board to be able see part of the basin.

## 11. CAG / IAG Updates

### CAG

The CAG held a face-to-face meeting during the week of the Forum. They hosted presentations from the IJC in regards to demonstrating mapping capabilities; from RESPEC to provide an update on the Lake of the Woods TMDL work; and from OMNRF on land use planning in the basin. CAG members continue to indicate interest in government's responses to the cumulative effects of mining letter and the status of the Water Quality Plan of Study. The

CAG may look to have a representative from the New Gold mine provide a presentation in the future.

### IAG

The IAG also held a face-to-face meeting during the week of the Forum. They also hosted presentations from the Board to provide updates on the EC, AEHC and IWI projects; as well as from MPCA in regards to The Lake of the Woods TMDL study. The group had a great discussion on the parcelization of forestry land and its threat to the ecological integrity of the watershed. Concerns regarding mining activities such as New Gold and Twin Metals were also raised.

## **12. 2016 International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum**

The Forum week was very productive and brought together many stakeholders, researchers, and the general public for a number of meetings and 2 days of presentations. This year marked record attendance at 160 participants. Strong science was presented covering a variety of subject matter including: cyanobacteria and algal toxins, flora and fauna, climate change, Rainy-Namakan rule curves evaluation studies, and remote sensing/monitoring/modelling.

Ryan Maki of Voyageurs National Park was awarded the Kallemeyn award which recognizes outstanding professional achievements and contributions to research and resource management in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods basin. Board member Todd Sellers was awarded the Wilson Stewardship award for his contributions to binational efforts in the basin and for his leadership role of the Lake of the Woods Water Sustainability Foundation.

## **13. Roundtable**

### Status of transboundary coordination of environmental emergency planning and response measure review

This topic came out of discussions with the CAG and IAG last summer. The Board is supportive of developing such a review and suggests that it be added to the AEHC portion of the work plan.

**Action:** AEHC to add the transboundary coordination of environmental emergency planning and response measure review to their work plan.

### IWI Project status update

The Board went through the list of projects provided prior to the meeting. Four of the six IWI projects will be completed this month. Once projects are completed, Board members are reminded to consult with the Engagement Committee to determine whether communication opportunities are warranted and appropriate.

The HPAB risk assessment proposal development will likely be separated into two IWI projects.

**Action:** IJC liaison to provide IWI project leads with a checklist (when available) to assist with managing projects.

### Letters of Recognition

The Board agreed that Mike Ward, Earl Klyne and Jenny Moorman be sent letters from the Co-Chairs in recognition of their service.

**Action:** Charlene to contact Lee Grim and Ryan Maki to request a few bullets that the secretaries could use to craft a letter. The letter should be provided to Shawn Mason by the first week of May to be presented to Mike at his farewell party.

**Action:** Secretaries to draft letters of recognition for Early Klyne and Jenny Moorman.

**Action:** Earl Klyne is no longer participating as a Board member and should be removed from distribution lists.

The process for providing the Board with notices of resignation was also discussed and that a more official process should be developed to notifying members. It was suggested that for new Board appointments, that the IJC include wording to their appointment letters that indicate that should the member resign their membership, that they contact the Board secretaries who will notify the Board Co-Chairs and Committee Co-Chairs.

#### Other

There was a discussion regarding the Province of Ontario's response to the Boards inquiry regarding the Steep Rock Mine rehabilitation project. The briefing request was elevated to ADM-level and a letter was sent to the Board Co-Chairs.

An update on IMA activities was provided. The IMA is conducting a self-assessment to determine what it would be in the future under different scenarios. Scenarios were closely linked to the WQ POS. Results of the assessment to come out in the near future.

### **14. Next Board Meeting**

The Board will appear before the Commission at the semi-annual meeting, on April 21<sup>st</sup> from 8:30-9:30am ET in Washington DC. The Next Board Teleconference will be in May to finalize the work plan and other business. The Board secretaries will canvass for a suitable date and time.

### **15. Review of Action Items and Adjournment**

Actions items were reviewed by the Canadian Co-Chair and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 15:00 CST.