

International Souris River Board
Final Minutes of July 10, 2007, meeting
Minot Holiday Inn Riverside

Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Dale Frink.

1. Review of Agenda.

Agenda was approved. as presented.

2. Approval of Minutes from February 2007 ISRB and September 2006 ISRB Meetings

- i. *Clarification of US Co-secretary.* Dale Frink noted that Bob White and Mike Sauer will share the duties of the US Co-secretary.

Moved by Gregg Wiche to accept the Minutes. Seconded by Doug Johnson. Carried.

3. Review of Action Items from February 2007 and September 2006 Meetings

- i. *Template for public meetings.* Ed Eaton noted that he had sent the template.
- ii. *Fall deadline for annual report to the IJC.* Dale Frink stated that Bob White has all the data required on water quantity. He does not have the water quality data. Bruce Holliday noted that the 2006 Canadian water quality data has been completed. There was some discussion of the need to print a hardcopy report. Ed Eaton noted that the Rainy Board submits their report only in pdf format. Mark Colisomo noted that presently, the IJC prefers to have the annual reports in both electronic and hardcopy format.
- iii. *Minutes on IJC website.* Mark Colisomo said that there is only one page of the 1989 Agreement on the website.

ACTION: Brian Yee to follow-up with IJC.
- iv. *Discussion document on governance.* Russell Boals stated that he has not completed this task.
- v. *Water quality annual report for 2003-05.* Bruce Holliday noted that the report is still a work in progress. Both Bruce and Mike Sauer have been working on other priorities. Bruce has had a summer student work on some data analysis.
- vi. *2001 Souris Post-Flood Report.* Ed Eaton reported that he recently sent out a pdf of the report. The USACE is responsible under the 1989 Agreement to provide the Board with a post flood report. Ed reported on lessons learned and recommendations in the report. He noted that a review of the operating plan has not taken place. Ed noted that Annex A has excessive verbage and there are varying interpretations of the meaning of the text.

ACTION: Natural Flow Methods Committee to develop a scoping plan for such a review.

- vii. *2007-08 work plan.* Russell Boals noted that he will have a governance structure document and a 2008-09 work plan document prepared prior to the September conference call.

ACTION: Russell Boals to prepare governance structure document and 2008-09 work plan.

- viii. *USFWS 15 year comprehensive conservation plan.* Megan Estep reported that the report has not yet been finalized. The draft is available as a pdf.

- 4. **Review of July 9 Public Meeting.** Meeting was held but no members of the public came. Dale Frink noted that ads were put into the media. Russell Boals suggested meeting with the public at some of their events. Others suggested sending out invitations to specific interest groups or meeting in some of the smaller communities in North Dakota. Commissioner Olsen noted that public attendance will likely improve over time – for many of the IJC Boards, the initial public meetings were lacking public attendance. It was noted that the overview presentations made at the July 9 meeting were valuable, particularly as a briefing to new members of the Board.
- 5. **Compilation of Souris River Natural Flow to May 31, 2007.** Rich Elkin reviewed the determination of natural flows which indicated a deficit of 4040 dam³. Doug Johnson noted that SWA's operations were based on real-time data at Sherwood and their calculations to the end of May indicated that deliveries were balanced and perhaps even a small surplus had been delivered. He expressed his concerns that SWA only received the end of May natural flow determination in July and receiving information that late can make water management more difficult.

Moved by Gregg Wiche to accept the Natural Flow determinations. Seconded by Bob Harrison. Carried.

- 6. **Review of Current Hydrologic Conditions and Forecast for Summer and Fall 2007**
 - i. *Saskatchewan.* Rich Elkin and Doug Johnson provided a hardcopy report on conditions to the end of May and a verbal update on current conditions.
 - ii. *North Dakota.* Steve Robinson reviewed a handout. James Meyer gave a review of an updated prepared by Charlene.
 - iii. *Manitoba.* Bob Harrison reported that spring runoff in the Manitoba portion of the Souris River basin was well below average due to low antecedent conditions. The crest occurred in late April and there was no flooding. There was little inflow from North Dakota and the peak was primarily due to local runoff. Conditions have improved in June due to local rainfall and releases from J. Clark Salyer.

Commissioner Olsen suggested the Board be cognizant of effects of climate change on water management.

- 7. **Operation of U.S. Refuges and Reservoirs on the Souris River.** Tedd Gutzke reviewed operations of the Upper Souris and J. Clark Salyer Refuges from January through May 2007 and reviewed proposed refuge operations for the remainder of 2007. It was noted that if SK releases water, the water would be stored in Lake Darling. Any inflow into J. Clark Salyer will be passed through. Tedd suggested that if the deficit could be made up over a longer

term rather than a slug release it would be more conducive to USFWS.

8. **Saskatchewan Concerns regarding Lake Darling Operations.** Doug Johnson recommended that the NFMCC should review the impacts of proposed revision to Lake Darling operating levels, in particular, how varying water levels can affect apportionment delivery requirements of the Souris River at the Saskatchewan-North Dakota border.
9. **Report by the Natural Flow Methods Committee.** Megan Estep has had discussions with Doug Johnson and a face-to-face meeting of the committee is being contemplated for September.
10. **Update by the Flow-Forecasting Liaison Committee.** James Meyer reported on behalf of Charlene Prindiville that the committee had nothing new to report since the last meeting.

11. Water Quality Issues

- i. *Update on Total Maximum Daily Load activities and future plans.* Mike Ell reported that there is a requirement for states to report under the Clean Water Act a Total Maximum Daily Load. Dissolved oxygen and fecal coliform, metals and nutrients are a potential problem in the reach of the Souris River from the border to Lake Darling. Dr. Wei Lin, North Dakota State University reported on preliminary results of research conducted by himself and one of his graduate students on the Upper Souris River Dissolved Oxygen Total Maximum Daily Load Project. During their field studies, livestock were observed in, and close to, the river. He noted that DO dropped below 5 mg/l near the beginning of December through to the end of March. Dr. Lin requested assistance on data contacts in Saskatchewan.
- ii. *US EPA and Canadian federal government water quality representatives on Board.* John Geidt reported that Ayn Shmit sent her regrets. EPA has not submitted a nomination for a representative. Commissioner Olsen noted that he has expressed his concerns to the IJC and to the EPA regarding the lack of active involvement of the EPA on the Board. Dwight Williamson noted that US EPA had been involved in the Souris River Bilateral Water Quality Monitoring Group which has been merged into the International Souris River Board. Dwight suggested that US EPA involvement in the ISRB is required. John Geidt suggested that a letter from the Board or the IJC to EPA regional management may influence the priority placed on involvement of the US EPA on the ISRB. John noted that he would take the matter back to his US EPA regional management.

ACTION: John Geidt to raise the matter of US EPA involvement in the ISRB to US EPA management.

- iii. *Report on March 30 oil spill at Boundary Dam.* Brian Yee noted that a spill of transformer oil had occurred from the SaskPower plant at Boundary Dam. All oil from the spill was captured and no oil from the spill crossed the International Boundary. Notice of the spill was provided to North Dakota by Saskatchewan Environment.

12. Discussion and Update on Water Management Projects

- i. *Boundary Dam coal mine expansion, dewatering project.* Doug Johnson reported that Prairie Mines and Royalty Ltd. has a proposal to expand the Shand South coal mine. The proposed expansion will extend the southern extent of the mine to 1.5 miles north of the US border. Draft project specific guidelines for an environmental assessment of

the project have been prepared and are available on-line. Brian noted that part of the proposal includes dewatering to access the coal seam and this water may flow to the Souris River. Dennis noted that ND would like to be kept informed of the progress of the environmental assessment. Dale Frink asked if the USEPA should be involved given that this development is occurring on a river flowing into the US. John Geidt noted that the US EPA gives priority to National Environmental Protection Act files and the Boundary Dam project does not fit the criteria for a NEPA file. He suggested that the ISRB should make a formal request to the US EPA if it wishes the Agency to be involved in reviewing the Boundary Dam coal mine expansion project.

13. IJC Integrated Mapping Initiative.

Ann Fritz reported on the Integrated Hydrologic Units project in North Dakota. The data will be available soon from The National Cartography and Geospatial Data Centre (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>), and the ND State GIS hub at <http://www.nd.gov/gis>. Ann noted that she hopes to have the ND Souris data on the site soon.

Mike Laitta reported on the Souris River Basin Hydrographic Harmonization Preliminary investigation. He reviewed work that was done on the St. Croix. The data are available from a link on the International St. Croix Watershed Board webpage on the IJC site at <http://web10capp.er.usgs.gov/imf/sites/IJC/launch.html>. Mike reported on a meeting held in Regina in June and his findings regarding his review of the Souris River data he has received as a follow-up to that meeting. He noted that the SK Hydrologic Network v2 is not linked to the US hydrologic network. The PFRA and USGS has resolved drainage basins to the hydrometric stations at the 1:50000 and 1:24000 scale in the Souris basin. A harmonized hydrologic network with integrated drainage basin delineations would allow automated delineation of a drainage basin at any point along the river.

There was discussion about whether this is a project that the Board wanted to do. There is funding from the IJC. The Board members were unanimous in their support of the project.

14. IJC Update.

Paul Pilon, Mark Colisomo, and Commissioner Olsen noted that there was nothing new to report.

15. Other Business

- i. *Alameda Dam spillway gates* – Doug noted the SWA has identified a problem with the gates and the gates will require repair.

16. Date of September 2007 Conference Call.

The call was set for 10:00 a.m. CDT (9:00 a.m. CST in SK, 9:00 a.m. MDT in Denver), Friday, September 21.

FINAL AGENDA
INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD
Minot Holiday Inn Riverside, 2200 Burdick Ave., Minot, North Dakota
8:30 a.m. CDT, July 10 , 2007

1. Review of agenda (*Dale Frink and Russell Boals*)
2. Approval of Minutes from February 2007 ISRB meeting, and September 2006 ISRB meetings
 - i. Clarification of US co-secretary (*Dale Frink*)
3. Review of action items from February 2007 and September 2006 meetings
 - i. Template for public meetings (*Ed Eaton*)
 - ii. Fall deadline for annual report to the IJC (*Bob White and Mike Sauer*)
 - iii. Minutes on IJC website (*Brian Yee*)
 - iv. Discussion document on governance (*Russell Boals*)
 - v. Water quality annual report for 2003-05 (*Bruce Holliday and Mike Sauer*)
 - vi. 2001 Souris Post-Flood Report (*Ed Eaton*)
 - vii. 2007-08 work plan (*Russell Boals and Ed Eaton*)
 - viii. USFWS 15 year comprehensive conservation plan (*Megan Estep*)
4. Review of July 9 Public Meeting (*Dale Frink and Russell Boals*)
5. Compilation of Souris River Natural Flows to May 31, 2006 (*Rich Elkin and Steve Robinson*)
6. Review of current hydrologic conditions and forecast for summer and fall 2007
 - i. Saskatchewan (*Rich Elkin and Doug Johnson*)
 - ii. North Dakota (*Steve Robinson and Charlene Prindiville*)
 - iii. Manitoba (*Bob Harrison*)
7. Operation of U.S. Refuges and Reservoirs on the Souris River (*Tedd Gutzke*)
8. Saskatchewan Concerns regarding Lake Darling Operations (*Doug Johnson*)
9. Report by the Natural Flow Methods Committee (*Megan Estep*)
10. Update by the Flow-Forecasting Liaison Committee (*Charlene Prindiville*)
11. Water Quality Issues
 - i. Update on Total Maximum Daily Load activities and future plans (*Dennis Fewless*)
 - ii. US EPA and Canadian federal government water quality representatives on Board.
 - iii. Report on March 30 oil spill at Boundary Dam (*Brian Yee*)
12. Discussion and Update on Water Management Projects
 - i. Boundary Dam coal mine expansion, dewatering project (*Doug Johnson*)
13. IJC Integrated Mapping Initiative (*Mike Laitta and Ann Fritz*)
14. IJC Update (*Paul Pilon, IJC Commissioners*)
15. Other Business
 - i. Alameda Dam spillway gates
16. Date of September 2007 Conference Call