

INTERNATIONAL LAKE SUPERIOR BOARD OF CONTROL

Minutes of the March 8, 2010 meeting

The International Lake Superior Board of Control met on March 8, 2010 in a meeting room of the DoubleTree Hotel in Detroit. Colonel Drolet convened the meeting at 2:30 p.m. The attendees were:

United States	Board Members	Canada
COL J. Drolet, Alt. Member		Mr. D. Fay
	Secretaries	
Mr. J. Kangas		Mr. R. Caldwell
	Regulation Representatives	
LTC J. Davis		Mr. R. Caldwell
Mr. S. Thieme, Alt.		
	Associates	
Mr. D. Sawruk		Mr. J. DeLuzio
Mr. D. Dasho		Mr. R. Stefano
Mr. C. Woodruff		Mr. T. McAuley
Ms. S. Daniel		
Mr. J. Oyler		
Mr. Z. Jeffries		
Dr. J. Selegean		
Mr. T. Dahl		
Mr. R. Thomas		
Mr. E. Tauriainen		
Ms. M. Kropfreiter		
Mr. J. Koschick		
Mr. K. Kompoltowicz		

Item 1. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as issued (encl 1).

Item 2. Update on Hydrologic Conditions and Regulation

LTC Davis updated the Board on hydrologic conditions for Lakes Superior, Michigan-Huron, and Erie, and provided slides of recent net basin water supplies, levels (observed and forecasted), and Lakes Superior/Michigan-Huron water balance parameters.

Water supplies to the Lake Superior basin in the past 6 months were below average.

- Evaporation from Lake Superior is estimated to have been about 18% below average for September through December 2009. Lake Superior's surface temperature is higher than average. Water supplies to the Lakes Michigan-Huron basin in the past six months were also below average. Evaporation from Lakes Michigan-Huron is also estimated to have been slightly below average during September through December 2009.
- Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron levels are well below average, with Lake Superior continuing in its longest period of below-average levels (since April 1998) and Michigan-Huron in its second-longest period of below-average levels (since January 1999). Both lake systems recovered significantly in the past year, but have fallen to about where they were a year ago. Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron were 17 and 22 cm (6.7 and 8.7in.) lower than average, respectively, on March 8.

- Lake Superior outflows were below average from September through March; outflows were not limited by Criterion (c) as the regulation plan specified outflows less than preproject conditions. Outflows were as specified by Regulation Plan 1977-A, and the gate setting at the Compensating Works remained equivalent to ½ gate open.
- The Board was presented a range of projected levels for the next 6 months, along with slides showing how levels compare to the previous two years. With average supplies, Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron levels are expected to remain well below average.
- Lakes Superior is expected to rise above chart datum in May; Michigan-Huron levels are above chart datum.
- The 1900-1986 “standardized departure” data as used in Plan 1977-A show that Lake Superior is slightly lower than Lakes Michigan-Huron.
- Lake Superior’s ice cover is much less extensive than average.
- Airborne measurements of the snow water equivalent on the Lake Superior basin will be made later in March.

Item 3. Update on Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions

Mr. Caldwell reported that Ontario Power Generation (OPG) provided the Board with an update on the discharges of the Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions. The Ogoki Diversion into Lake Nipigon (which flows into Lake Superior) averaged 128.5 m³/s (4,500 cfs) during September 2009 - February 2010. The Long Lac Diversion averaged 32.9 m³/s (1,200 cfs) for the same period. The total diversion was reported to be 116% of average for September to February.

Since 1999 a continuous flow of at least 2 m³/s (70 cfs) has been maintained during the summer (Victoria Day weekend through Labor Day weekend) from the north outlet of Long Lake (Kenogami Dam). This agreement (i.e., the Aguabason Water Management Plan) between OPG and the local First Nations provides water for environmental enhancement of the Kenogami River, and reduces the amount diverted to Lake Superior. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources requires a minimum flow of 0.55 m³/s during the rest of the year and has extended the 2 m³/s minimum requirement from Labor Day weekend to the end of October (i.e., Saturday of Victoria Day weekend through Halloween). An average of 1.1 m³/s (40 cfs) was spilled from September through February.

Item 4. Flow Measurements

4a) Hydropower plants. Flow measurements are scheduled for all hydropower plants in 2010.

4b). Compensating Works. No flow measurements were conducted during the reporting period and none are currently planned for the Compensating Works in 2010. However, should the study proposed by Dr. Bain be funded this may allow the Board to study flows at various gate settings under relatively low Lake Superior conditions.

Item 5. Hydropower Plant Maintenance

No significant maintenance items were reported at ESELCO. There will be work in the canal and powerhouse over the next 2 years, but this will not impact their ability to discharge their flow allotment.

LTC Davis reported that the new runner for Unit 10 was installed from November 5, 2009 to February 12, 2010. Shortly thereafter some vibration problems were experienced; the shaft bearing was found to need re-shimming. The unit is expected to be back on-line on March 11. During the past 6 months, units at the Government Plant were taken off-line at various times for about 38 hours to correct electrical faults and for scheduled maintenance. ESELCO was able to utilize all of the allocation that the government plant was unable to use during these activities. Routine maintenance was performed during the reporting period at the Brookfield Renewable Power plant. Mr. Stefano reported that Brookfield Renewable Power's 3 units would be taken out of service for maintenance, one at a time, from April 25 to May 15. This is not expected to affect their ability to pass their monthly water allocation since they still have sufficient capacity with the remaining units.

Mr. Sawruk noted that Edison Sault Electric is in the final stages of being sold to Cloverland Electric. The Public Service Commission is planning a public hearing on the sale for May 11 and 12. The sale is expected to close on August 1. The Executive Vice President of Cloverland, Mr. Daniel Dasho, attended the Board meeting.

Item 6. Compensating Works

6a). Inspections. The 5-year detailed inspection of the Compensating Works is expected to take place the last week of May on the U.S. portion, and in late fall on the Canadian portion. During the reporting period, routine inspections were conducted with no major items found.

6b). Maintenance. Brookfield Renewable Power dewatered, repainted, and repaired 2 of its 8 gates (Gates 6 and 8) of the Compensating Works last summer and fall, with the work being completed on October 22, 2009. Similar work will be done to Gates 1 and 2 in 2010. Brookfield reported that it plans to install concrete box culverts at Gate 1 to provide water to the fishery remedial works channel during repairs to Gate 1. Their plan was forwarded to resource agencies and the Batchewana First Nations for their concurrence. Gate 1 may need to be closed for 1 or 2 days for installation of the culverts and for some repair activities. The Board requested that Brookfield obtain concurrence in writing from the interested parties in order for the Board to inform the IJC of developments and request any needed deviation permission. Routine maintenance was completed on the remaining portion of the Compensating Works.

Item 7. Peaking and Ponding Update

The Board noted that the levels below the Locks were high enough from the fall to the close of the navigation season in late January such that ponding was not restricted. No vessel delays were reported due to water levels. As Lakes Michigan-Huron are expected to stay above datum, it is not expected that ponding will be restricted during the next six months. The Board agreed to send a letter to the IJC requesting that the 5-year assessment of peaking and ponding be deferred until completion of the International Upper Great Lakes Study, which is examining the issue in some detail.

Item 8. 2009 Meeting With the Public

The Board made plans for its next meeting with the public, which will take place in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. It agreed to utilize a telephone call-in method for public participation. The Board briefing will be posted to the web page to allow those calling in to follow the presentation. The meeting was tentatively scheduled for early June with a final date to be determined over the next several weeks.

Item 9. Other Business

9a). International Upper Great Lakes Study proposals. The Board noted that it had been requested to support two proposed studies. One to examine the efficiencies of sea lamprey trapping under varying flow conditions, and one to examine fish stranding under varying rates of gate movements in the Compensating Works. The Board had sent letters to the study proponents expressing support for obtaining the environmental information, and to request additional details on the flow variations being requested. To date, no additional details had been obtained. The Board's staff will remain in contact with the study proponents to obtain further details on the flow variations, in order that the IJC's approval for a deviation from the regulation plan can be obtained prior to the start of each study. The Board also agreed to explore the concept of requesting authority from the IJC to approve minor deviations. This will be raised for discussion at the Appearances. The Board will also inform the IJC that the study proposals, should they be funded, may require a quick approval from the IJC for deviating from the regulation plan.

9b). Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway Study LTC Davis reported that comments on the Supplemental Report had been addressed in February.

9c). Status of Lock Replacement. LTC Davis reported dredging of the downstream approach channel and the upstream cofferdam had begun last fall. The upstream cofferdam is expected to be completed in late spring, 2010.

Item 10. Review semi-annual progress report

Mr. Kangas led a review of the revised progress report. The Board had several comments and revisions to be incorporated prior to sending the final report to the IJC.

11. Next Meeting and IJC Appearance

The IJC Appearance is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on April 21. The fall Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 7 in the Kingston region.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL LAKE SUPERIOR BOARD OF CONTROL
MEETING OF MARCH 8, 2010

Approved Agenda

1. Approval of agenda
2. Update on Hydrologic Conditions and Regulation
3. Update on Long Lac and Ogoki Diversions
4. Flow Measurements
 - a. Hydropower Plants
 - b. Compensating Works
5. Hydropower Plant Maintenance
6. Compensating Works
 - a. Inspections
 - b. Maintenance activities
7. Peaking and Ponding Update
8. 2009 Meeting With the Public
9. Other Business
 - a. International Upper Great Lakes Study proposals
 - b. Status of Great Lakes – St. Lawrence Seaway Study
 - c. Status of Lock Replacement
10. Review semi-annual progress report
11. Next Meeting and IJC Appearances