

MEETING SUMMARIES - FINAL

International Rainy - Lake of the Woods Watershed Board
Basin Meetings

August 13-14, 2019

Baudette, MN

Tuesday August 13

Meeting with Resource Management Agencies 1:30pm – 3:00pm CT

The majority of Board members and several agency representatives attended the meeting – there were too many to list.

The meeting with resource management agencies was centred around the following four presentations.

1. Project Team members Kelli Saunders, Bev Clark and Nolan Baratonio provided an update on the Objectives and Alerts project, which was initiated by the IRLWWB to meet its mandate to protect aquatic ecosystem health relevant to priority issues in the Rainy-Lake of the Woods basin. Bev provided background information on historical objectives and alert levels and described the approach taken to determining updated water quality objectives and alerts for IJC consideration.
2. Carey Hernandez from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency provided an update on Minnesota's Total Maximum Daily Load's (TMDL) initiative for Lake of the Woods. The project is nearing completion. The report is currently with the Environmental Protection Agency for review. It will then undergo a 30-day comment period in late 2019 or early 2020 and will be submitted for final approval once public comments have been addressed.
3. Michael Goffin from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) provided an update on ECCC's science plan which will assist in determining whether the development of a Canadian phosphorus reduction target is needed. Michael noted that ECCC modeling results will begin to become available in the December to March period and that ECCC is planning to provide a summary of the results of its science plan, as well as potential next steps (based on work under the Federal-Provincial working group) at the 2020 Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum.
4. Melissa Mosley from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) provided an update on OMNRF's fisheries and aquatics monitoring activities in the Fort Frances area. More specifically, Melissa summarized activities related to Broadscale Monitoring (BsM)- BAMS*, Lake Sturgeon Investigations/Monitoring –BAMS, Roving Creel Surveys- BAMS, Tournament Monitoring of Smallmouth Bass –FF District/KE District, Water Quality Monitoring –BAMS, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Monitoring, and the development of new Quetico Provincial Park Fish and Aquatic Ecosystem Stewardship Plan.

[*BAMS- MNRF Biological and Aquatic Monitoring Section- Thunder Bay office]

In addition to the formal presentations, an update on the IRLWWB's three proposed IWI projects was provided. The proposed projects are:

- Enhancements of Current Monitoring Programs for Sediment, Nutrients, and Metals in U.S. and Canadian tributaries to Rainy River
- AIS Coarse Filter Risk Assessment
- Vulnerability of Border Lakes and Streams to Zebra and Quagga Mussel Infestation

It was noted that the 17th annual International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Forum will take place on March 11-12, 2020 at the Rainy River Community College, International Falls.

Wednesday August 14

Meeting with the Community Advisory Group 1:00pm – 2:00pm CT

U.S. Member Participants

COL Jansen (Co-Chair)
Amy Adrihan (for Suzanne Hanson)
Mike Hirst
Shane Bowe
Jim Stark
Kelly Sjerven
Patty Thielen
Pam Tomevi

Canadian Member Participants

Michael Goffin (Co-Chair)
Karen Cederwall
Greg Chapman
Erika Klyszejko
Mark Lee
Trina Rawn
Todd Sellers
Kiley Shebagegit

Community Advisory Group Participants

Tom Mosendy
Paul Anderson
Reid Caron
Stephen Blair

International Joint Commission

Commissioner Pierre Béland
Commissioner Lance Yohe
Wayne Jenkinson
Mark Gabriel
Nick Heisler

Secretariat

Scott Jutila
Diane de Beaumont

Additional Participants

Rebecca Seal-Soileau (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) (by phone)
Kelli Saunders (International Watershed Coordinator)
Felicia Minotte (GAC)
Véronique Hiriart-Baer (ECCC)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Board co-chairs welcomed everyone and invited participants to introduce themselves.

2. IRLWWB Update

Everyone agreed there was no need to provide updates on Board activities since these were already covered at the CAG meeting earlier that day.

3. Roundtable/Discussion

Issues raised by CAG and Board members are as follows:

- Mining activities in the basin remain a concern. The Twin Metals project was raised as an example where some of the regulatory requirements were lifted by the current U.S. administration. The

issue of cumulative effects of mining was raised. Michael Goffin pointed out that the Canadian and U.S. Governments responded to this concern. There was discussion of the potential for an IWI project that would inventory mining activities in the basin and provide baseline information of past, current and proposed projects using ARC GIS for Board and public use; could be used to assess cumulative effects.

ACTION: Board to consider developing an IWI proposal per discussion above.

- A CAG member mentioned that the *Review of Transboundary Coordination of Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response* needs to be more specific to the basin and include all international crossings in the basin.

ACTION: Michael Goffin to review the Review of Transboundary Coordination of Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response report to ensure the information in the report is relevant to the entirety of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed, and report back to the Board at its next meeting.

- The CAG is interested in the issue of microplastics and a potential presentation from the Experimental Lakes Area. The CAG will relay any concern after the presentation. There was discussion on what the Governments of Canada, U.S. and Minnesota are doing to manage this issue.
- It was mentioned that there is a need to increase public awareness efforts related to AIS and to determine how the CAG can be more involved. It was pointed out that the Board's proposed IWI proposal related to AIS includes an awareness component. Funding opportunities were discussed. It was suggested that the Board invite agencies to present on this topic or others at Board public meetings.

ACTION: Board to consider how to support awareness of this issue, including inviting agencies to present on this topic or others at Board public meetings.

4. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

Actions items were reviewed and the meeting was adjourned.

Board Meeting
2:30pm – 4:30pm CT

U.S. Member Participants

COL Jansen (Co-Chair)
Amy Adrihan (for Suzanne Hanson)
Mike Hirst
Shane Bowe
Jim Stark
Kelly Sjerven
Patty Thielen
Pam Tomevi

Canadian Member Participants

Michael Goffin (Co-Chair)
Karen Cederwall
Greg Chapman
Erika Klyszejko
Lucas King (by phone)
Mark Lee
Trina Rawn
Todd Sellers
Kiley Shebagegit

International Joint Commission

Commissioner Pierre Béland
Commissioner Lance Yohe
Wayne Jenkinson
Mark Gabriel
Nick Heisler

Secretariat

Scott Jutila
Diane de Beaumont

Additional Participants

Rebecca Seal-Soileau (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) (by phone)
Kelli Saunders (International Watershed Coordinator)
Felicia Minotte (GAC)
Véronique Hiriart-Baer (ECCC)

5. Welcome and Introductions

As meeting chair, COL Jansen welcomed everyone and invited participants to introduce themselves.

6. Emo Agricultural Research Station Presentation

Greg Chapman, Canadian co-chair of the Industry Advisory Group (IAG), introduced IAG member Kim Jo Bliss, who gave a presentation on the Agricultural Research Station located in Emo, Ontario. She summarized the station's history, projects and outcomes. Of note, the fact that local farmers/producers are shifting to more environmentally friendly practices to help protect water quality.

7. Review of Meeting Materials

The Board approved the suggested switch to the order of discussion of agenda items 4 and 5, as well as the addition of a potential Water Levels-related proposal under agenda item "IWI Proposals".

Action items were addressed as completed or as ongoing. The following outstanding actions will remain on the running list of action items.

ACTION: AEHC to complete AEH report in late fall 2019.

ACTION: Suzanne Hanson to provide MPCA's description of its initiative and role related to water quality objectives.

ACTION: Secretariat to take website training.

8. IWI Proposals

- Jim Stark lead the discussion concerning the challenges with having the IJC consider proposed IWI projects that are linked to priorities not clearly defined in the Board work plan. This issue is directly related to the proposal *Enhancements of Current Monitoring Programs for Sediment, Nutrients, and Metals in U.S. and Canadian tributaries to Rainy River*. To correct this situation, the Board agreed to amend its work plan per the following action, and to resubmit the proposal for IWI funding consideration in fall 2019 or spring 2020.

ACTION: Jim Stark to draft language, for Board approval, that would allow IWI proposal consideration. ACTION: AEHC to update and resubmit proposal for IWI funding consideration in fall 2019 or spring 2020.

- Todd Sellers and Mike Hirst lead the discussion on the status and proposed next steps concerning two ongoing proposals: 1) *AIS Coarse Filter Risk Assessment* proposal, 2) *Vulnerability of Border Lakes and Streams to Zebra and Quagga Mussel Infestation* proposal. Proposal #1 received only minor suggestions on first IWI review and was resubmitted in July. Subsequent IWI review indicated a few conditions prior to approval which are being addressed and will be resubmitted soon. Proposal #2 is on hold and could still be considered for later funding. There is interest in this being re-submitted after review comments are addressed. USGS overhead is an issue. It should be resubmitted with more bi-national coordination.
- Lucas King lead the discussion on a potential proposal related to the mapping of wild rice areas in the basin. The proposed project would inform decision-making around wild rice. Each Indigenous group would lead their own and all would come together in the production of the overall map. It was noted that this initiative may be useful for the Adaptive Management initiative and that Water Levels Committee (WLC) should be involved. It was recommended that the proposed project should consider all previous work done on wild rice mapping.

ACTION: Lucas King to draft project proposal for discussion at the next Board meeting.

- Erika Klyszejko lead the discussion on a potential proposal related to the investigation of water level profile at the international dam that will assist with determining the possibility of targeting the high curve without threatening dam operations.

ACTION: Erika Klyszejko to develop draft proposal for discussion at the next Board meeting.

9. Board Work Plan – 2019-20

It was noted that there is still outstanding input to the current year Board work plan.

ACTION: IAG co-chairs and Water Levels Committee to submit work plan updates to the Secretariat by September 5, 2019.

10. Update from Board Committees

- The Water Levels Committee (WLC) noted that it wasn't able to follow its Directive and Order because of a timing issue, and that amendments to the Directive/Order are required to rectify this issue.
ACTION: WLC to draft proposed amendments to its Directive and Order for discussion at next Board meeting and submission to the IJC before fall 2019 semi-annual meeting.
- Nothing further to note related to the Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee and the Engagement Committee

11. Roundtable

- The Board was informed of the June 2020 Canadian Water Resources Association conference in Kenora.
ACTION: Secretariat/Mark Lee to forward to Board further information on the conference.
 - The Board agreed to proceed with a recommendation related to potential candidates for the U.S. CAG co-chair role once proposed changes to the Board Directive and CAG/IAG Terms of Reference have been approved.
ACTION: Board to discuss potential CAG candidates once the amendments to its Directive have been dealt with – following fall 2019 semi-annual meeting
 - At the Board-CAG meeting earlier today, a CAG member mentioned that the *Review of Transboundary Coordination of Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response* needs to be more specific to the basin and include all international crossings in the basin.
ACTION: Michael Goffin to review the Review of Transboundary Coordination of Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response report to ensure the information in the report is relevant to the entirety of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed, and report back to the Board at its next meeting.
 - The IAG U.S. co-chair provided an update on the group's recent meetings.
 - The IJC provided a run down of the imminent re-appointment of members, as well as the appointment of new U.S. member Kelly Sjerven, who also accepted to co-chair the Engagement Committee. It was confirmed that the fall 2019 semi-annual meeting is scheduled for the week of October 21, and that the Board appearance is expected to take place on the Wednesday. It is also expected that the Commissioners will announce the approval of the Board's proposed changes to its Directive at the fall 2019 semi-annual meeting. The IJC is looking forward to receiving the proposed changes to the Water Levels Committee Directive/Order before the semi-annual meeting this fall.
- Other IJC news are as follows:
- IJC awaiting for ECCC to name replacement to Canadian Water Levels Committee Canadian co-chair.
 - The Sparrow project is completed and the report published.
 - The IWI proposal deadline this fall is end of October.
 - IWI testimonials from Boards have been requested, as per email circulated to members. The testimonials will be used for the upcoming IWI evaluation report.
 - The announcement related to a fall semi-annual workshop will be made soon.
 - The IJC is meeting with the Grand Council Treaty 3 tomorrow. (Michael Goffin mentioned the end of August 2019 meeting between Grand Council Treaty 3 and ECCC related to the Canada-Ontario Agreement concerning the Great Lakes.)

- The IJC is continually looking for content for its Water Matters online quarterly publication and encouraged the Board to contribute content.
- Kelli Saunders provided a quick update on International Watershed Coordination program activities and noted that the focus this summer is on communicating science out to the public. Kelli also offered to channel our stories out to the public.

12. Other Board Business

- The Board Secretariat pointed out that proposed Board IWI testimonials were circulated to members for their review and input. They will be submitted to the IJC at the end of August 2019.
ACTION: Members are asked to forward any input or comments on the proposed IWI testimonials to the Secretariat by August 29.
- Board members did not have any comments related to the proposed Board meeting schedule 2019-2020 included in the meeting package.
- The Secretariat outlined that it will initiate the drafting of the Board's appearance presentation for the 2019 Fall Semi-Annual.
ACTION: Secretariat to draft appearance presentation and send to Committee and CAG/IAG co-chairs by September 12 for input by September 26.

13. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

Actions items were reviewed and the meeting was adjourned.

Public Meeting
6:30pm CT

The Public Meeting was attended by five members of the public and the majority of Board members. Other participants included IJC staff as well as Commissioners Béland and Yohe.

The meeting was opened with an introduction by COL Jansen, who welcomed participants and provided a brief presentation covering Board mandate, structure, membership, and activities. The presentation was followed by a question and answer period.

There were no questions or comments. The meeting was adjourned by COL Jansen who thanked the participants for their time.