

International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board

Summary of Discussion

October 7, 2019 meeting via teleconference

9:00-11:00 CT

1. Welcome and introductions

As meeting chair, Michael Goffin welcomed everyone and invited participants to introduce themselves.

The list of participants is as follows:

U.S. Member Participants

COL Jansen (Board Co-Chair)
Suzanne Hanson)
Mike Hirst
Shane Bowe
Jim Stark
Kelly Sjerven
Pam Tomevi
Amy Adrihan
Matt Gouin
Scott Jutila (Secretary; Engineering
Advisor)

Canadian Member Participants

Michael Goffin (Board Co-Chair)
Karen Cederwall
Greg Chapman
Erika Klyszejko
Lucas King
Mark Lee
Trina Rawn
Todd Sellers
Teika Newton
Diane de Beaumont (Secretary)

International Joint Commission

Mark Gabriel
Nick Heisler
Wayne Jenkinson

Additional Participants

Kelli Saunders
Bev Clark

2. Review of meeting materials

No additions to the agenda were identified and action items were addressed as completed or as ongoing – outstanding actions are listed below. The summaries from the August 2019 Basin meetings were approved.

- **ACTION: AEHC to complete AEH report in Spring 2020.**
- **ACTION: Suzanne Hanson to provide MPCA's description of its initiative and role related to water quality objectives.**
- **ACTION: Secretariat to take website training.**
- **ACTON: Board to discuss potential CAG candidates once the amendments to its Directive have been dealt with – following fall 2019 semi-annual meeting**
- **ACTION: (From Board-CAG meeting) Board to consider developing an IWI proposal related to the mapping of mining activities in the basin.**
- **ACTION: (From Board-CAG meeting) Board to consider how to support awareness of AIS issue, including inviting agencies to present on this topic or others at Board public meetings.**

3. Review and approve 2019-20 Board Work Plan

The work plan for this current year has been updated with input received from committees and advisory groups, except for the WLC whose input is pending.

- **ACTION: Scott to provide updates within next couple of weeks.**
- **ACTION: Secretariat to verify AEHC work plan updates.**

The work plan also includes added text under 4b on page 6, which expands on the list of priority issues per the Board's August discussion. There was discussion of including the *IWI Enhancements of Current Monitoring Programs for Sediment, Nutrients, and Metals in U.S. and Canadian tributaries to Rainy River* proposal in the Board work plan to be submitted for funding consideration in Spring 2020. Board members voiced no objections to the above.

- **ACTION: Secretariat to include IWI Enhancements of Current Monitoring Programs for Sediment, Nutrients, and Metals in U.S. and Canadian tributaries to Rainy River proposal in Board work plan as discussed above.**

4. Objectives and Alerts Project

Bev Clark provided a summary on recent updates to the report and outlined recommendations and next steps. Update on project and discuss any needed changes to the report/public comment period. It was noted that the project team did a good job of addressing comments in the report and that the executive summary is clear. It was suggested that mention of the fact that this is a Board report is needed in the executive summary. The Board approved the report with minor clarification as discussed above. It was agreed that the report would undergo a 30-day public review period following its final submission on October 15, 2019. It was also agreed that the Board needs to discuss what is to come next, including Phase II of this project as soon as possible.

- **ACTION: Secretariat to post report for public comment – 30-day period starting after Oct 15.**
- **ACTION: AEHC to map next steps and recommendations to Board related to Phase II and share with Board prior to its January 21, 2020 meeting.**

5. Review of Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response

Per the Board discussion with the CAG in August 2019, Michael Goffin reviewed the Environmental Emergency Planning report to ensure the information in the report is relevant to the entirety of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed. He concluded that the report's introduction clearly defines the focus of the report, which was to assess whether plans and procedures are in place for coordinating environmental emergency response across the border, with special attention to, but not limited to, the international rail crossing at Fort Frances / International Falls. He also pointed out that the report's findings and recommendations are relevant to the entirety of the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed. He noted that while information was gathered in relation to environmental emergency planning at the local level, this information was specific to International Falls and Fort Frances and the Ranier International Train Bridge crossing. He recommended for completeness that the Board engage with Rainy River and Baudette communities to ensure a similar level of emergency planning and cross border cooperation. The Board agreed to the recommendation. There was mention that the CAG's comment related to the entire basin not just cross border cooperation. Michael Goffin pointed out that each country has already plans in place and that the fact the two countries are cooperating is value-added.

- **ACTION: Secretariat to request input from Baudette and Rainy River concerning emergency planning and cross border cooperation.**

6. IWI Proposals

Update on AIS Coarse Filter Risk Assessment proposal

The AEHC is working through addressing the last set of comments from IJC staff and will be resubmitting the proposal in fall 2019 once the schedule and budget have been updated.

- **ACTION: AEHC to update the proposal's Gantt chart and budget, and resubmit for IWI funding consideration in fall 2019.**

Update on new Wild Rice Mapping – Phase 1 proposal

A proposal was circulated to the Board a few minutes before this meeting. This is a new project that requires Board agreement in order to carry forward and present to the IJC. The Board agreed in principle and will provide comments in short order so as to allow for submission in fall 2019. The proposal will also be added to the Board work plan. There were questions related to public access to the report, project parameters and use of existing data. It was noted that the report can be made public but that it will be up to each contributing community to decide to make its data public; that existing can be used; and that the project parameters will remain within the Rainy-Lake of the Woods basin as a start.

- **ACTION: Board to provide comments to Lucas King by Tuesday, October 15, 2019.**
- **ACTION: Lucas King to update proposal as appropriate and submit for fall 2019 IWI funding consideration.**
- **ACTION: Secretariat to include proposed project in its work plan as discussed.**

Update on new proposal to investigate high flood risk rule curve impacts on forebay water levels

This new proposal will be submitted for funding consideration in spring 2020. It was noted that this project falls under operational funding not IWI. It should be presented under WLC activities in the appearance presentation and future meeting agendas. The proposal and the WLC letter to the Commission related to the spring 2019 incident will be highlighted at the upcoming October 2019 Board appearance.

Update on Project WET

It was noted that the contractor has only been able to work on grades up to grade 5 as Minnesota's standards are being rolled out slowly. The remaining standards won't be available until 2020. As a result, the first phase of this project won't be completed before January or February 2020. A proposal for the next phase of this project would be submitted for the spring 2020 IWI funding submission.

Discuss next steps for Enhancements of Current Monitoring Programs for Sediment, Nutrients, and Metals in U.S. and Canadian tributaries to Rainy River proposal

The proposal's work plan was adjusted to be considered for IWI funding, but it was pointed out that the project is now in need of a Canadian co-lead (USGS indicated they are still interested in the project). The Board indicated its support for the proposed project and agreed that it should be considered in future once there's Canadian involvement. The project is now on hold until possibly the spring 2020 IWI funding round.

HPAB-SAB-IRLWWB collaboration on mining

Mark Gabriel informed the Board of a proposed collaboration between the HPAB, SAB and IRLWWB on an IWI proposal related to mining. The first meeting of the boards will take place on October 24 in Ottawa. It appears that a few IRLWWB members were approached to attend the meeting; Todd Sellers agreed to represent the Board at the meeting.

- **ACTION: Todd Sellers to attend the October 24, 2019 meeting related to an IWI mining proposal.**

7. IWI Process

The Board was informed that this initiative is in progress and that Mike Hirst will be in touch with members to obtain feedback on topics such as timelines.

- **ACTION: Mike Hirst to draft proposed Policy and Structure for submitting IWI Proposals for Board review.**

8. WLC Directive and Order

The proposed changes to the WLC Directive and Order were summarized. The Board approved the proposed changes unless significant objection is voiced by the end of this week.

- **ACTION: Board to review the updated WLC Directive and Order and provide feedback to Erika Klyszejko by Friday, October 11, 2019.**

9. Fall 2019 Semi-Annual Meeting

Members were reminded of the following upcoming semi-annual meetings:

- Board appearance on Wednesday, October 23 at 11:30am.
- Multi-board communications workshop on Tuesday, October 22.
- IJC reception on Wednesday evening at 6:30.

Members were asked to confirm their in-person participation at the semi-annual meeting. Teika Newton, Pam Tomevi and Todd Sellers (Board spokesperson) are planning to attend the communications workshop, as well as other semi-annual meetings. Other members planning to attend the semi-annual in person are: Michael Goffin, Scott Jutila, Karen Cederwall. Members/others planning to attend remotely are: COL Jansen, Kelli Saunders.

- **ACTION: Secretariat to send note out to Board concerning members' participation at the October 2019 semi-annual meeting.**
- **ACTION: Board to send any proposed changes or comments related to the draft Board appearance presentation to the Secretariat by Wednesday, October 16, 2019.**

10. Roundtable

Update on Wheeler's Point Gauge funding options

Michael Goffin and Jim Stark are discussing various funding options and are moving this issue forward.

Debrief on Great Lakes' Canada-Ontario Agreement meeting with GCT3

ECCC and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks met with Grand Council Treaty 3 in August to give an overview of the proposed *Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, 2020* and hear feedback from Grand Council Treaty 3. At the meeting, Michael Goffin committed to bringing comments back to this Board. The main concern raised had to do with water levels and there seemed to be misunderstanding about water levels in the basin. The latter might be something that needs attention going forward. Lucas King pointed out that the wild rice mapping project may help with awareness as well as story map initiative. He also noted that the most significant comment voiced at the meeting was the fact that the draft COA 2020 doesn't address treaty rights.

Debrief on August meeting between IJC and GCT3

Nick Heisler indicated that meeting participants demonstrated good general awareness of board activities. Agreed to commit to working together and holding future meetings.

Other

Kelli Saunders noted that Nick Heisler, Lucas King and she discussed how to enhance knowledge in the basin and put a list together of almost a dozen projects of the IJC and Grand Council Treaty 3, which will form the basis for a story map. The group is ready to move ahead on this initiative.

Karen Cederwall suggested the development of an IWI proposal to encourage Métis engagement in Board activities.

Wayne Jenkinson reminded members who require IJC assistance to travel to the fall 2019 semi-annual to get in touch with IJC staff (Mark Gabriel/Wayne Jenkinson) to make travel arrangements prior to the semi-annual meeting.

11. Review of Action Items and Adjournment

Members were reminded that the next Board meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2020 at 9am central time, via teleconference. Action items were reviewed and the meeting was adjourned.