

A Souris Basin Study Update

Fifth Quarterly Update for the International Souris River Study Board

July 2020

Welcome to the news bulletin from the International Souris River Study Board. The Study Board looks forward to keeping you informed of its progress as we investigate flooding, water supply, and other water related concerns in the Souris River Basin. Learn more about our [mandate](#).

Bruce Davison and Gregg Wiche
Canadian and US Study Managers

Exercise your Social Muscle

Please forward this bulletin to people who are interested in flood control, water supply, and other water related issues in the basin, and encourage them to [sign up](#) to receive news and updates from the Study Board in their inbox.



Souris River at Manitoba Provincial Highway 10 near Minto, MB. Photo taken by: Mark Lee

STUDY NEWS

Study Progress

COVID-19 is an ongoing complication affecting current resources and the overall schedule of the Study. The Study Board has created several options for schedule adjustments to make up for the time lost during the COVID-19 crisis. The options have been submitted to the IJC, and the Study Team is waiting for direction from governments. Once direction is provided, the Public Advisory Group, Resource and Agency Advisory Group, Indigenous Peoples and general public will be updated.

The Study Team created alternative building blocks for potential changes to operating rules in the first three phases of plan formulation. The Study Team combined the alternative building blocks into preliminary operating plans in phase IV. In phase V, these operating plans were further refined based on

feedback received from workshops held in November 2019 with the Public Advisory Group (PAG), and Resource and Agency Advisory Group (RAAG).

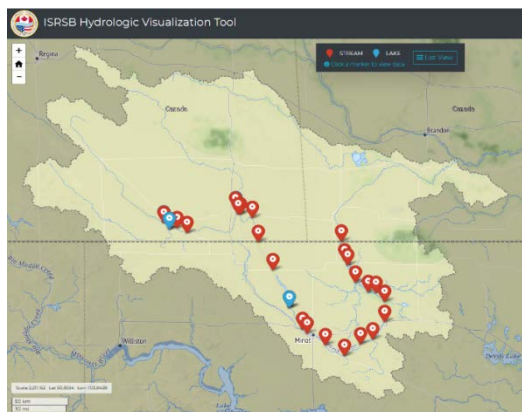
The Study Team is continuing to work on documentation for phase V, completing interim deliverables, and the final Study report. However, COVID-19 has limited the Study Team's ability to run simulations. As the situation improves, the Study Team will be able to resume running and analyzing simulations of the alternatives.

Continued Engagement

The Study Team plans to continue engagement with the PAG, RAAG, and Indigenous Nations and Tribes through webinars in the coming months. Once travel restrictions have been lifted and resources are available, the Study Team hopes to transition the webinars to in person workshops, if possible.

Hydrologic Visualization Tool

The Study has developed a Hydrologic Visualization Tool that allows the user to compare alternative simulation results at different locations in the Souris River Basin. It is currently being used internally as a tool to help the Study Team and Advisory Groups see the changes that are being made and how they might affect certain areas. This tool is something that will be made available to the Public at the end of the Study once the results have been finalized and the report has been completed.



Screenshot of ISRSB Hydrologic Visualization Tool.

Strategies for Dealing with Changes in the Future

The Study's focus is to investigate flooding, water supply, and other water related concerns in the Souris River Basin as outlined in the [Reference](#). Throughout the engagement process, the Study Team has heard concerns in the basin that fall outside of the Study scope. The Study can ensure that the concerns are preserved for future consideration by documenting and highlighting them in reports and open issue statements to the IJC and ISRB transition team. Continuation and utilization of the Study Board work will be addressed through:

1. Recommendations of future studies, and
2. Adaptive Management within the mandates of the ISRB and participating agencies

How are Future Studies Started?

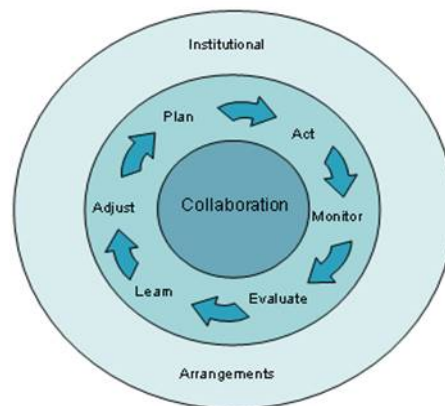
Future studies can be started by a reference from governments, similar to the way that this Study was initiated, or the International Souris River Board can make use of the IJC's International Watersheds Initiative (IWI) for smaller inquiries. The IWI employs an ecosystem approach to transboundary watershed issues and supports IJC boards in their work to manage resources, promote communication, and conduct scientific studies. The IWI supports this work through board-submitted projects, which then proceed through the IWI review process before approved projects are implemented. You can learn more about the IWI at <https://ijc.org/en/what/iwi>.

What is Adaptive Management?

The International Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management Task Team (2013) defined adaptive Management as:

A structured, iterative cycle for improving actions through long-term monitoring, modelling and assessment. Adaptive management allows decisions to be reviewed, adjusted and revised as new information and knowledge becomes available and/or as conditions change.

The products of the Souris Study are tools that can be used in the adaptive management cycle and for assessing different alternatives and new information on downstream effects of reservoir management as they become available and important to citizens in the basin.



Adaptive Management Cycle – depicts and highlights the importance of collaboration and institutional arrangements both in terms of the state of the science and social interactions.

Resources on the Web

The Study Board has resources on its website to help you become more familiar with flooding and water supply issues in the Souris River Basin. Click on [Library](#) on the home page to view:

1. [PAG Mid-term Report](#)
2. A pamphlet on [The 1989 International Agreement for Water Supply and Flood Control in the Souris River Basin](#)
3. A brochure on the [International Souris River Study](#)
4. [Dams and Reservoirs in the Souris River Basin](#) – a fact sheet
5. [The Unique Hydrology of the Souris River Basin](#) – a fact sheet

Calendar

Did you know that study board meetings and other public events are listed on our website? View these and upcoming public events under [Calendar](#) on the home page.

Stay connected. Be involved.

Web: www.ijc.org/en/srsb

Email: srsb@ijc.org

Follow us on [Facebook](#) using #sourisriverstudy

References

IJC [International Joint Commission] Adaptive Management Task Team (2013): Building Collaboration Across the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River System: An Adaptive Management Plan for Addressing Extreme Water Levels. Report to the International Joint Commission, May 30, 2013. Accessed on June 2, 2020 <https://ijc.org/en/glam/building-collaboration-across-great-lakes-st-lawrence-river-system>.