



**IJC Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee
Thirty Second Meeting
Teleconference Meeting Summary**

June 26, 2020 10:00am-11:30am

| U.S. Members | Canadian Members | Commission Staff |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Carol Miller (Co-Chair) | Jeff Ridal (Co-Chair) | Matthew Child (Secretary) |
| Mike Murray | Karen Kidd | Victor Serveiss |
| Mic Isham | Jerome Marty | Rob Phillips |
| Lucinda Johnson | Gail Krantzberg | Li Wang |
| Joe DePinto | Maggie Xenopoulos | Mark Burrows |
| Drew Gronewold | | David Burden |

Regrets: Bob Hecky, John Livernois, Mike Slimak

Guest: Jen Vanator

1. Welcome and Introductions, and Approval of Draft Agenda

The U.S. Co-Chair chaired the call and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Attendance was confirmed. The draft agenda was approved by consensus.

2. Updates

IAGLR Anderson-Everett Award

This year's IAGRL award for service to IAGLR was awarded to the IJC, with special mention about the ongoing contributions of its advisory boards to transboundary progress and science-based decision-making.

Triennial Assessment of Progress Report

Staff confirmed that a draft TAP report has been forwarded to the Commission for review and discussion. The report greatly benefitted from input from the SPC and other advisory boards.

Membership Update

Bob Hecky has announced he will be stepping down from the SPC effective the end of August. Bob was thanked for his outstanding contributions to the SAB and IJC since 2014. Bob contributed to several board work groups and their reporting, including co-chairing the Declining Offshore Lake Productivity project.

Members are encouraged to identify potential candidates to fill the Canadian position. Several suggestions were made orally during the meeting that will be added to the candidate list from the 2019 recruitment. Some areas of expertise that could be considered for the SPC include fisheries, hydrogeology, and aquatic invasive species.

Action: Secretary to circulate list of potential candidates for review and input.

3. Ongoing Project Updates

Great Lakes Early Warning System (Lucinda Johnson)

The GLEWS Phase 1 report was recently approved by the Commission. The report will be transmitted to the Great Lakes Executive Committee co-chairs and posted to the SAB webpage. An informational webinar with Commissioners will be scheduled to discuss the results of Phase 1, and what is planned for Phase 2 of the project.

Declining Offshore Lake Productivity (Joe DePinto)

The report is complete and recently underwent some tweaks to its recommendation. The report has been forwarded to the Commission for approval.

Stressor Interactions (Staff)

The project report is complete. Due to the queue of reports waiting for Commission approval, it may take several weeks for the report to be considered by the Commission.

Great Lakes Science Plan (Gail Krantzberg)

The project Steering Committee has had several meetings over the last few months to discuss and develop a series of online surveys. The 'Delphi-like' survey approach will solicit subject matter expert input to narrow down priority areas that can be explored through a virtual work group, and then eventually at an in-person workshop.

The project scope of work is focused on ecosystem science, although the Steering Committee has been discussing the importance of addressing science needs related to human health and socio-economic health as well. Through discussion there was general agreement that the human health perspective should be reflected, although due to concerns about keeping the scope of the project manageable it might be necessary to pursue a deeper dive on science needs related to human health as a parallel and related project.

HPAB's Harmonized Fish Consumption Advisory Work Plan (Jeff Ridal)

This project has been affected directly by COVID, and engagement with the Akwesasne community is likely to be delayed until it is safe to conduct in-person communications and engagement. Contracting is proceeding, however, so the project team will be in place for engagements when it is safe to do so.

RCC's Connecting Channels (Jeff Ridal)

The contractor report has been submitted. The work group is considering whether to (i) re-work recommendations from the contractor's report to reflect the Commission's guidance on report recommendations, or (ii) develop its own work group report. Regardless, the draft work group output will be circulated to the SPC for review.

Action: Secretary to circulate the Connecting Channels project IAGLR presentation.

4. New Projects

Members were reminded that the Commission recently approved the two new work plans advanced by the SPC.

Action: Secretary to circulate a table of work group membership for all SPC projects.

Nutrients Synthesis (Mike Murray & John Livernois)

This is a joint SPC and Water Quality Board project, and the work plan benefitted from insights provided by the Annex 4 (Nutrients) co-chairs. The project will primarily summarize IJC nutrients-related reports and recommendations, and apply those insights to assess progress made under Domestic Action Plans for Lake Erie, with a secondary emphasis on Lake Ontario. The approved work plan is currently being converted into a scope of work document suitable for contractor procurement through the U.S. system. Through discussion, it was clarified that the primary emphasis will be on phosphorus, although nitrogen and nutrient stoichiometry will also be taken into account as appropriate.

Hutchinson Environmental was suggested as a potential contractor for the project.

Action: Members are requested to:

- i. Self-identify for Nutrients Synthesis work group membership by contacting Secretary and Work Group Co-Chairs
- ii. Identify external subject matter experts suitable for work group membership
- iii. Identify potential contractors to receive the request-for-proposal

Great Lakes Early Warning System Phase 2 (Lucinda Johnson)

This is a full SAB project, co-chaired by the SPC and RCC. The project will develop analytical techniques and a risk analysis approach to identify emerging stressors and threats in the Great Lakes, to complement the organizational approach developed as part of Phase 1. The project will include emphasis on Traditional Ecological Knowledge. The approved work plan is currently being converted into a scope of work document suitable for contractor procurement through the U.S. system. The project is expected to be completed by September 2022.

Maggie Xenopoulos volunteered for the work group, and Mic Isham will identify an individual from the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission.

The project team will need to identify potential contractors; suggestions included the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Dr. Mae Davenport at University of Minnesota.

Action: Members are requested to:

- i. Self-identify for GLEWS Phase 2 work group membership by contacting Secretary and Work Group Co-Chairs
- ii. Identify external subject matter experts suitable for work group membership
- iii. Identify potential contractors to receive the request-for-proposal

5. New Work Plans

Traditional Ecological Knowledge (Mic Isham and Jerome Marty)

Members were advised that Annex 10 (Science) has a TEK task team that is finalizing a document on TEK enhancement of management approaches. It was noted that the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission has experience in TEK directing management.

An SPC work plan is in its formative stages, and a draft should be ready for review in autumn.

Through discussion, a number of points were raised:

- The other advisory boards (RCC, WQB and HPAB) have Indigenous members, and members with an interest in TEK, and their contact information has been provided to the SPC leads.
- The GLEWS Phase 2 project will consider TEK and therefore linkages between the projects will need to be carefully considered.
- The IJC is also developing an Indigenous Collaboration and Engagement Plan, and alignment with that effort should also be considered.
- Both TEK knowledge and TEK governance need to be considered. This importance of both has been reinforced by experiences in Areas of Concern.

Action: Secretary to arrange call between SPC TEK work plan leads and IJC staff involved in the IJC's nascent Indigenous Collaboration and Engagement Plan to ensure alignment between initiatives.

Other Work Plan Ideas

Members were asked if there were other potential work plan ideas. In the discussion that followed the following suggestions were offered:

- The Board co-chairs are scheduling a videoconference with Commissioners for a strategic discussion on monitoring (SPC members were previously asked to comment on the draft white paper). Additional board focus on one or more aspects of monitoring may be desirable based on the outcome of the videoconference. Staff clarified that at this point, Commissioners do not seem to be seized with any other topics for the boards to advance; the Commission views the boards as the experts and are looking to the boards for their ideas.
- The 50th Anniversary of the Agreement is coming up quickly (2022); although the Parties do not seem to be treating it as a high priority there have been some discussions at IJC on how to appropriately acknowledge and celebrate that important milestone. For example, updating the Great Lakes Atlas has been proposed, and the Water Quality Board has also having discussions related to the Anniversary.
- Natural disaster resilience could form the basis of a work plan.
- The role of science in the economic recovery following COVID could form the basis of a work plan.
- Suggestion received following the call: a project on changing ice cover/winter and implications of ice loss (at least for the upper Great Lakes) could form the basis of a work plan.

Action: Include the 50th Anniversary of the Agreement as a standing agenda item for future SPC meetings.

6. Next Meetings

A Doodle poll will be circulated for a September videoconference call.

The October Semi-Annual meeting is likely to be held virtually; once that is confirmed plans can be made for the October SPC meeting.

7. Other Business

Gail Krantzberg advised that she is getting involved in a project that will explore COVID testing in wastewater effluent; the project will include the related science, engineering and policy questions and implications. It was noted that HPAB is considering a COVID-related work plan.

Jerome Marty advised that Environment and Climate Change Canada has launched formal consultations on the creation of a Canada Water Agency (accessible at <https://www.placespeak.com/en/topic/6321-protecting-canadas-fresh-water/>).

The question of whether SPC videoconferences should be recorded was raised. It was noted that it is not standard IJC practice to record advisory board meetings.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

*Meeting record prepared by Matthew Child and reviewed by Carol Miller and Jeff Ridal.
Please forward any errors or omissions to childm@windsor.ijc.org*