



## MEETING SUMMARY

### Attendees:

**RCC:** Gavin Christie, Debbie Lee, Chris Winslow, Dale Hoff, Erich Emery, Ian Campbell, Kathy McKague, Marty Blake, Michael Twiss, Ram Yerubandi, Rebecca Rooney, Réjean Couture, Sandra Eberts, Val Klump.

**Regret:** None.

**Staff:** Lizhu Wang, Matthew Child, Rob Philips, Dave Burden

1. Roll call and approval of draft agenda
  - Agenda was approved as presented.
2. New work plans for the next funding cycle
  - Timeline for new work plan – Finalized by workgroup in December, to be discussed by board Co-chairs in January, to be briefed to Commissioners before February, and final approval by commissioners in April.
  - Nutrient Adaptive Management Phase-2
    - Following the recommendation of Phase-1 of the project, Annex 4 released a draft Lake Erie Adaptive Management Framework (LE-AMF) in November 2020. The document describes at a high level, the overall conceptual framework, organizational structure, and key questions and current hypotheses to effect adaptive management. The LE-AMF is expected to evolve as stakeholder input is received, roles and responsibilities are finalized, and sources of funding are secured.
    - Phase-2 of the project will focus on assessing the institutional arrangements of the LE-AMF. There is some potential overlap with the SPC's Nutrient Synthesis project. The two projects' leads have met to discuss the potential overlap to make sure the two projects are complementary. After revision, this project will evaluate the framework and assess program only.
      - Target audience and how to get them involved:  
Workgroup lead has met with Annex 4 Adaptive Management Task Team Co-chairs, and they shared the LE-AMF and provided input to the work plan.
    - It was discussed that this Lake Erie focused work could be used as a model to be applied to the other lakes or to be expanded to include all lakes.

- Ram Yerubandi is interested in serving on the workgroup.
- Making the Most of Citizen Science
  - Work plan improvement - Suggested changing “Citizen Science” to “Community Science”.
  - Project will focus on information synthesis, e.g., compiling state and federal agency guidelines on “credible data”.
  - Project will also assess if existing community programs and resources meet the desired academic and agency data rigor, identify target audience, and recommend how to get them involved.
  - Project will focus on water quality parameters initially and may expand to biological parameters at a later time.
  - Discussion:
    - Due to resource limitation, government monitoring programs are more and more interested in using community science to collect information, which may allow governments to get data/information that they could not get by themselves before.
    - There are existing community based monitoring programs in both Canada and the US. Such as:
      - The Gordon Foundation document  
<https://gordonfoundation.ca/resource/elevating-community-based-water-monitoring-in-canada/>
      - NYSDEC Division of Water WAVE Program.
      - Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network
  - Workgroup: Chris Winslow and Kathy McKague Co-leads, and Sandy Eberts, Dale Hoff, Rebecca Rooney, and Ram Yerubandi as workgroup members.

### 3. GL Science Plan update

- Two online surveys have been conducted to survey several hundred scientists, managers, and others who are interested in Great Lakes management and science.
- The workgroup is in the process of planning the 1<sup>st</sup> virtual workshop.
- It was pointed out that it is important to distinguish what kind of science is needed from what needs to be done.
- The virtual workshop will break into 5 discipline areas (physical processes, biogeochemical cycles, food web dynamics, watershed dynamics, and human dimensions and cross-cutting topics) and 5 lakes (Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Erie, Lake Michigan).
- The goal of the virtual workshop is to refine and finalize high level science priorities and critical science questions need to be answered.

### 4. Operationalizing GL Early Warning System update

- This is the Phase-2 of the project to look at how to operationalize the early warning system.
- Had one workgroup call to introduce the large workgroup and get all familiarized with the project and tasks.

- The 2<sup>nd</sup> workgroup call is today for a workshop with over 40 members to identify stressors in 3 case studies (known, suspected, unknown) on chemical, biological, nutrient, climate change, and human behavior.
  - Plan to have a poll in Jan to further synthesize the needed information.
  - Will hold a workshop on an undetermined date.
5. GL Hydrological Conceptual Model
- Project will develop a conceptual framework for numerical modeling with input of stakeholders.
  - Had one workgroup meeting and identified a list of people to be interviewed and a list of much broader people to be surveyed.
  - There is a parallel effort funded by the USGS to develop lake-wide and basin-wide statistical and/or numerical models.
  - It was mentioned that we need to get more information on private/industrial related needs.
  - Sandy will send the stakeholder list to the committee (done).
6. GL Connecting Channel workgroup report
- The workgroup has received several comments on the early version of the report.
  - Michael Twiss and Rebecca Rooney will meet to revise the workgroup report.
  - It was mentioned that there is a need to have a discussion on the role of RCC members from government agencies on recommendations.
7. SPC TEK work plan
- Seeking input and participation – advance TEK, integrate into current science.
  - The workgroup will have a call on January 12. RCC members are welcome to join.
  - It was recommended inviting Annex 10 TEK committee Co-chairs to join the workgroup.
  - It was mentioned that the Alberta Oil Sands Wetland Monitoring program developed a floristic assessment tool using culturally important and medicinal plants to integrate TEK and western science-based monitoring.
  - The Gordon Foundation document (<https://gordonfoundation.ca/resource/elevating-community-based-water-monitoring-in-canada/>) also covered the Indigenous Guardians role in community-based water monitoring.
  - RCC members send additional comments to staff before January 11.
8. GL Monitoring next step – GL board Co-chairs’ discussion
- The WQB Co-chairs proposed to have a white paper to serve as the initial reference in the development of a far reaching (de novo) compelling vision for monitoring of the Great Lakes.
  - To form a work group consisting of 6-10 members pulled from members of the various boards, with several external experts from institutions we do not normally interact with and supported by one or two IJC staff. A target white paper length could be 5-10 pages with appropriate references and appendices to support the initial

vision. The white paper should align with recent and ongoing board projects' work but propose a compelling vision for monitoring of the Great Lakes for the next several decades.

- Agency RCC members (Kathy's team, Debbie's team, Ram's team, Dale's team, and Chris' team) will discuss with their teams to identify members to serve on the task group (done).
- The Great Lakes board Co-chairs will have a call on January 25 to discuss and identify task group members.

9. Other business

- 2020 TAP:
  - Published on December 10, had a public webinar, a GLEC webinar, a webinar with government officials, and will have more meetings in 2021 with continued dialogue.
  - Canada does not have a GLRI, Commissioners wrote a letter to Prime Minister to relate TAP on major issues for funding.
- Next RCC call – Doodle Poll for Feb 9, 10, 11

Adjourn at 10:30

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