

**MINUTES
INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE MEETING**

September 14-15, 2020

The International Joint Commission met virtually in Executive Session on Monday, September 14, 2020, from 10:00 a.m. to 15:00 p.m. EDT and on Tuesday, September 15, 2020, from 11:00 a.m. to 13:30 p.m. EDT, chaired by Pierre Beland.

COMMISSIONERS

Jane Corwin	Chair, U.S. Section
Pierre Beland	Chair, Canadian Section
Henry Lickers	Commissioner, Canadian Section
Merrell-Ann Phare	Commissioner, Canadian Section
Rob Sisson	Commissioner, U.S. Section
Lance Yohe	Commissioner, U.S. Section

SECTION STAFF

Chuck Lawson	Secretary, U.S. Section
Camille Mageau	Secretary, Canadian Section
Norman Barth	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
Frank Bevacqua	Public Information Officer, U.S. Section
Kevin Bunch	Writer-Communications Specialist, U.S. Section
Pierre-Yves Caux	Director, Science and Engineering, Canadian Section
Rachel Carmichael Campbell	Student Analyst, Canadian Section
Mark Colosimo	Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section
Susan Daniel	Legal Advisor, U.S. Section
Caron de Mars	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
Antionette Dunston	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
David Fay	Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Mark Gabriel	Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section
Adam Greeley	AAAS Fellow, U.S. Section
Wayne Jenkinson	Senior Engineer Advisor, Canadian Section
Jeff Laberge	Information Management Analyst, Canadian Section
Jeff Kart	Executive Editor, IJC Newsletters, U.S. Section
Erika Klyszejko	Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Mike Laitta	Senior Advisor and GIS Coordinator, U.S. Section
Catherine Lee-Johnston	Environmental Officer, Canadian Section
Mark Leiva	Network Specialist, U.S. Section
Sarah Lobrichon	Public Affairs Advisor, Canadian Section
Brian Maloney	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Diane Moczula	Junior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section
Robert Phillips	Senior Water Quality/Ecosystem Advisor, Can. Section
Isabelle Reid	Executive Assistant, Canadian Section

Victor Serveiss	Environmental Advisor, U.S. Section
Carole Smith	Senior Advisor, Canadian Section
John Yee	Chief, IM and IT Services, Canadian Section
Shane Zurbrigg	Legal Advisor, Canadian Section

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

David Burden	Director
Antonette Arvai	Physical Scientist
Raj Bejankiwar	Physical Scientist
Jennifer Boehme	Physical Scientist
Mark Burrows	Physical Scientist
Matthew Child	Physical Scientist
Diane Varosky	Administrative Coordinator
Allison Voglesong Zejnati	Video-Communications Specialist
Li Wang	Physical Scientist
John Wilson	Physical Scientist

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

1. Commissioners approved the agenda as amended.

OUTSTANDING CORRESPONDENCE

2. Commissioners reviewed the list of outstanding correspondence noting that the agreed upon quarterly meetings with governments would provide an opportunity to follow up on key issues and outstanding correspondence for which the Commission is awaiting responses.

ACTION ITEM LIST, COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES LIST, AND COORDINATED CALENDAR

3. Commissioners reviewed the IJC Action Item List, the Communications activities list, and the coordinated calendar and received updates on several items, including progress on the Records Management initiative of the Commission.

READ OUT OF THE AUGUST 13th IJC GOVERNMENTS' MEETING

4. Commissioners reviewed the key messages and outcomes of August 13, 2020, meeting between IJC Commissioners and senior DOS and GAC staff and agreed to supplement the semi-annual meeting held with the Parties with quarterly information sharing meetings.

GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT

5. A. 2023 TRIENNIAL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS REPORT

Commissioners discussed the current process for developing the Commission's Triennial Assessment of Report (TAP) and outlined the approach that they believe should guide the development of the next TAP report in 2023. The main elements of the approach are: the TAP process should be developed and initiated after the PROP has been released; the report should assess and not just report on progress as documented in the PROP; the report should include data provided by IJC boards, as well as by the public; the Commission is to apply scientific rigor to public input; and the report should have SMART recommendations. Commissioners agreed to initiate discussions with the GLEC Co-Chairs during the Fall Semi-Annual meeting and again at the December meeting of the Great Lakes Executive meeting.

B. AGREEMENT REVIEW

Commissioners discussed a number of possible options that the IJC might pursue in order to contribute to the Party's review of the operation and effectiveness of the Agreement following release of the 2023 Triennial Assessment of Progress report. Commissioners noted its intent to build on current Water Quality Board efforts and to involve its Great Lakes advisory boards and the public in formulating its recommendations to the Parties.

C. GLWQA 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Commissioners noted that the 50th anniversary of the signing of the original Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement occurs in 2022, discussed preliminary ideas on how the Commission might be involved in the recognition of the anniversary, and agreed that the Commission first needs to find out what plans the governments are making to recognize the milestone. Commissioners requested that Section Secretaries and the GLRO Director prepare options for possible IJC involvement in keeping with the scale of governments' recognition of this milestone

GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER

6. A. GREAT LAKES-ST LAWRENCE RIVER CONDITIONS AND FORECAST

Commissioners received an update on conditions in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin and noted that all the water level on Lakes Superior, Michigan, Huron, and Erie are all still near record highs and Lake Ontario is just 12 cm above its long term average level for this time of year.

B. UPPER GREAT LAKES COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Commissioners received an update on implementation of the communications strategy to address upper Great Lakes water levels issues and agreed to the convening of a webinar in October to brief federal, provincial, state, municipal, First Nation Metis and Tribal elected officials on the extent and limits to which human intervention can influence upper Great Lakes water levels. Commissioners also approved a response to incoming correspondence from Restore Our Waters International regarding water levels in Lakes

Michigan and Huron and supported the Canadian Chair participation in an upcoming public event organized by the Georgian Bay Association and Georgian Bay Forever.

C. GAO REPORT FOLLOW-UP

Commissioners deferred discuss of this item to a later date.

RED RIVER BOARD NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

7. Commissioners received an update on outreach actions with respect to the nutrient management strategy, including the release of an article in the November 2020 IJC newsletter providing stakeholders and interested parties with information on the Board's Nutrient Management Strategy report. Commissioners confirmed their interest in scheduling a public webinar on the content of the report and the importance of proposed addition of phosphorus and nitrogen targets to the water quality objectives at the boundary. Commissioners also discussed the possibility of hosting a webinar to discuss options to achieve the targets that might be of interest to responsible authorities, should governments approve the Board's recommended Nutrient Management Strategy targets.

INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE

8. Commissioners received an update on the development of the white paper on watershed designation for boards. Commissioners also received an update on the status of the production of the IWI 5th Report to Governments, which will be provided to Governments in late 2020. They requested that staff develop an outreach strategy for the 5th report as this will improve public and government understanding and support for the IWI program in preparation for potential discussions with governments on board designation that may result from the watershed designation white paper.

CANADA WATER AGENCY

9. Commissioners approved a draft letter to the ministers of Environment and Climate Change Canada and Agriculture Canada and to Parliamentary Secretary Duguid in which the Commission shares lessons learned and best practices that might be of interest to the Canadian government as it moves towards the establishment of the Canada Water Agency. Commissioners requested that Communication staff consider how best to share with the public the IJC's input.

INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER STUDY

10. Commissioners received an update on the study and on preparations for the September 17-18, 2020, Indigenous engagement meeting. Commissioners reviewed a letter from the study's Public Advisory Group Co-Chairs and requested that staff draft a response to the Co-Chairs and provided DOS and GAC with the letter.

SHOAL LAKE

11. Commissioners reviewed a draft letter to the City of Winnipeg asking for information on water consumption rates relating to the IJC's Order and requesting a meeting to discuss other aspects of the Order.

OTHER BUSINESS

12. A. Fall Semi-Annual Meeting with Governments

Commissioners agreed to schedule an informal meeting with colleagues from State Department and Global Affairs as well as the formal IJC-Governments meeting held on the margins of the Semi-Annual meetings.

B. Great Lakes Adaptive Management Committee Public Advisory Group Update

Commissioners received an update on several outreach initiatives being considered for GLAM Committee Public Advisory Group activities in the expedited review of Plan 2014. The Public Advisory Group plans to host a public webinar next year prior to tabling its advice to GLAM under Phase 1 of the expedited review. Commissioners approved, in principle and subject to additional details to be presented at the October Executive meeting, an IJC public webinar with potential partners (GLAM and PAG) to provide background information on the objectives of the Expedited Review of Plan 2014.

C. New York State Lawsuit

Commissioners received an update on the New York State lawsuit and noted that the case is still with the Federal Court in New York awaiting a decision on whether the case will remain in Federal Court or be remanded back to the State Court.

D. Groundwater

Commissioners requested that information summarizing previous IJC work on groundwater issues in the Great Lakes and other transboundary areas be assembled as part of an effort by the Commission to become more familiar with the possible location of shared aquifers in the transboundary area and the connection between surface water and groundwater.

DECISIONS TAKEN VIA POLLING

International Niagara Board of Control

On September 14, 2020, Commissioners approved the reappointment of Ms. Jennifer Keyes as a Canadian member of the International Niagara Board of Control for a three-year term, effective from September 9, 2020, to September 8, 2023.

Accredited Officers of the St. Mary and Milk Rivers

On September 4, 2020, Commissioners approved a letter to the governments in which the Commission provides an update on the repairs being made to the St. Mary Canal and the Accredited Officers work with agencies in both countries to facilitate the repairs.

Water Quality Objectives Review

On August 31, 2020, Commissioners approved posting of the report entitled *A Review of international water quality objectives in the Souris, Red, Rainy-Lake of the Woods and St. Croix River Basins—Historical perspectives, trends and future directions*, which had been provided to governments in 2017 but not previously posted on the IJC website.

International Lake Superior Board of Control

On August 27, 2020, Commissioners approved: 1) amending the June 16, 2020, temporary Supplementary Order to permit the closure of Gate #1 of the Compensating Works on up to three different days during the period of August 1 through September 15, 2020; and 2) a letter informing Evolgen of the amendment.

Science Advisory Board-Science Priority Committee

On August 27, 2020, Commissioners approved the appointment of Dr. Nandita Basu to be a Canadian member of the Committee for a three-year term, effective from September 1, 2020, to August 31, 2023.

International Kootenay Lake Board of Control

International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control

On August 25, 2020, Commissioners approved the appointment of Colonel Alexander L. Bullock to be the U.S. Co-Chair of the International Kootenay Lake Board of Control and to be a US member of the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control for a three-year term on each board, effective from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, or until his duties as Seattle District commander end, whichever comes first.

Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management (GLAM) Committee

On August 24, 2020, Commissioners approved the appointment of Ms. Dena Abou-El-Seoud to be a U.S. member of the GLAM Committee for a three-year term, effective August 24, 2020, to August 23, 2023.

Fall 2020 Semi-Annual Meeting

On August 18, 2020, Commissioners approved the agenda for the Fall 2020 Semi-Annual meeting, which will take place October 16 and 19-24, 2020.

Minutes of the July 24, 2020, Executive Meeting

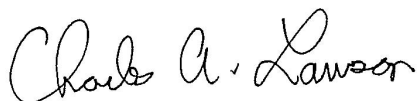
On August 13, 2020, Commissioners approved the minutes of the July 24, 2020, executive meeting.

Science Advisory Board - Science Priority Committee

On August 13, 2020, Commissioners approved: the Science Advisory Board-Science Priority Committee's report entitled *An Evaluation of Stressor Interactions in the Great Lakes*; a transmittal letter to governments, an engagement and follow-up plan, and the posting of the report on the SAB's website.

International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board

On August 5, 2020, Commissioners approved the reappointment of Ms. Patricia Clavet as a Canadian member of the board for a three-year term, effective from June 1, 2020, to May 31, 2023.



Charles A. Lawson
Secretary
U.S. Section



Camille Mageau
Secretary
Canadian Section