

**SPRING QUARTERLY  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**International Kootenay Lake Board of Control (IKLBC)**

**Webex Meeting**  
Hosted by USACE

**Monday April 17, 2023**  
**9:00 – 11:00 AM (PDT)**

**Participants**

	<b>Canada</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>Chair</b>	Evan Friesenhan	Colonel Xander Bullock
<b>Members</b>	Ted White	Roy Bartholomay
<b>Secretariat</b>	Martin Suchy	Sonja Michelsen
<b>IJC Advisors</b>	Rob Caldwell Catherine Lee-Johnston	Adam Greely John Allis
<b>IJC Commissioners</b>	Merrell-Ann Phare	Lance Yohe
<b>Guests</b>	Cameron Wyndham (ECCC student)	

**Supporting Documents** (attached to email)

0\_20221005\_IKLBC\_AnnualBoardMtg\_Minutes.docx  
1\_IKLBC\_April 17\_2023\_Hydrologic Conditions Update .pptx  
2\_IJC Correspondance\_IWI\_ClimateChangeProject.pdf  
3\_IKLBCWorkPlan\_20230412.docx  
4\_KOOTENAY-APR24-Spring2023Appearances.pptx  
\*\* 5\_IJC Letter to IKLBC-IOLBC on IWB scoping\_.pdf  
\*\* 6\_IKLBC\_KTOI\_Correspondence\_2023.pdf  
\*\* Attachment 1 – International Watershed Board Scoping Info Sheet – 20230410.pdf  
\*\* Attachment 2 – International Watershed Board Criteria.pdf

**1. Welcome**

The virtual meeting, held using the Webex platform, was opened at 9:00 am by Evan Friesenhan (Board Co-Chair, Canadian Section). Evan welcomed the attendees and Martin Suchy (Board Secretary, Canadian Section) introduced Cameron Wyndham, student intern at Environment and Climate Change Canada as a guest. Col. Bullock (Board Co-Chair, US Section) moved to adopt the agenda and was seconded by Ted White (Board Member, Canadian Section). Evan asked if the Board had any adjustments to the minutes from the 2022 Annual Board Meeting in October 2022, none were mentioned. Col. Bullock moved to approve the minutes and Ted seconded.

## **2. Hydrologic Update / Spring Rise Declaration**

Martin summarized the current basin conditions with a special focus on the declaration of spring rise for the 2023 freshet season. Since October 2022 the basin has seen mostly below normal precipitation. Temperatures have varied above and below normal over the same period. SWE at the Redfish Creek snow pillow station in the West Kootenay snow basin is near normal while that at Moyie Mountain in the East Kootenay snow basin is below normal. BC snow basin indices for the West and East Kootenay snow basins are 90% and 81%, respectively, as of April 1. The Northwest River Forecast Center April to July water supply forecast for Kootenay Lake at Queens Bay is below normal at 82%. An increase in inflow to Kootenay Lake was noted in the last two weeks, corresponding with a period of warmth and precipitation. High Streamflow Advisories on the Canadian side were also present in the West and East Kootenay basins around the same time. Freezing levels continued to remain low resulting in a holding pattern with respect to the declaration of the spring rise. Lake Kooconusa (Libby Dam forebay) is being held at a higher elevation than normal in response to the reduced water supply forecasts. The minimum elevation for the current year to date at Queens Bay on Kootenay Lake was 1,739.13 feet on March 28, before the April 1 requirement for elevation below 1,739.32 feet. The elevation at Queens Bay was above the IJC rule curve from April 11 to 14, however, during this time Corra Linn Dam was in freefall and outflow from the lake was being controlled by Grohman Narrows. Thus, the Applicant (FortisBC) was determined to have remained in compliance with the IJC Order.

## **3. Climate Change IWI Project**

Sonja Michelsen (Board Secretary, US Section) provided an update on the IWI Climate Change Project. A proposal for developing the project's scope was submitted to the IWI in November 2022, which included hydrologic modelling of potential future climatic regimes to assess their impact on streamflow and lake levels. The IJC responded, suggesting an alternative matrix approach and that Dr. Casey Brown at the University of Massachusetts perform the work with the help of a Canadian collaborator. A general consensus was reached that the Board would like more information on the proposed alternative methodology and outputs, and potential input on the project's scoping prior to approving the new scope.

## **4. Work Plan Update**

Martin presented recent updates to the Board's Work Plan. Based on discussions at the 2022 Annual Board meeting the status of ongoing projects had been updated and the details of upcoming projects added. A Communications Plan under the Board's Routine Activities is in development and will be shared with the Board upon completion prior to the Conference Call in June. Updates to the Priorities section involved the Corra Linn Dam spillway project, the Kootenay Lake Visualization Tool, the

Kootenay Lake Order Review and the Board's expansion. The Board approved these changes, and the Board Secretaries noted they would finalize the Work Plan and share with the IJC Advisors formally.

## **5. Pilot Watershed Board Discussion**

US Commissioner Lance Yohe gave an overview of the roles and responsibilities of an IJC International Watershed Board (IWB) and explained the rationale behind the IJC's desire for the International Kootenay Lake Board of Control (IKLBC) to transition into an International Watershed Pilot Board. The Board becoming an IWB Pilot would allow it to act in the interest of, and better serve, both Canada and the US by upholding the IJC's missions of conflict resolution and holistic basin management. This would include greater public and Indigenous engagement as well as adaptive ecosystem-based management. Furthermore, becoming an IWB Pilot would create more opportunities for IWI study funding due to a broader Board mandate. Canadian Commissioner Merrell-Ann Phare clarified that this transition would be a stepwise process and that the outcome could be different from other IWBs depending on the needs of the Kootenay basin. Commissioner Yohe also described the scoping initiative that will be undertaken by the IJC IWI team in the Kootenay Lake basin this summer in preparation for this potential transition. Stakeholders and key players in the basin will be consulted to determine their interest and to identify problems and concerns that could be remedied through the IWB transition. The IJC is asking the Board to recommend such contacts and has invited Board membership to participate in the discussions.

The floor was then opened for comments and questions from Board members. Col Bullock recognized the need for a holistic approach but had questions as to the desire from those within the watershed for such a transition and where the resources and funding for it would come from. Commissioner Yohe reminded the Board of the prospect of additional IWI funding but noted that the IJC would have to figure out where other resources would be acquired. Commissioner Phare cited questions from the public that the Board was unable to comment on at its Annual Public Meeting as interest of a broader management approach in the basin and suggested that building relationships with more organizations in the watershed as part of a broader mandate could bring in additional funding. Evan noted the timing of the transition as a potential issue, as the Board has a number of ongoing projects and changing its mandate part way through could affect them. Commissioner Yohe restated that the transition can occur in steps and wouldn't necessarily affect these projects. Ted raised concern at the possibility of inflaming any current issues in the basin with the transition. Commissioner Yohe responded with the conflict resolution role of the IJC, and how becoming an IWB might actually help to resolve these issues and prevent more from occurring in the future. Martin asked if the IWI team has any details regarding communications for the scoping initiative and times for when they would need Board input and participation. Adam Greeley (IJC Advisor, US Section) said they are still in the phase of identifying contacts and would share a timeline with the Board to allow for as much engagement as possible. The discussion ended with the Secretaries to review the background documents and FAQs that had been distributed and inform the Board at its next meeting.

## **6. Board Expansion, Outreach and Engagement**

Sonja provided an update on the ongoing communications surrounding the Board's expansion. A letter had been sent out to Tribes and First Nations in the basin opening up the Board membership to representatives from these groups. One response had been received, from the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, recommending Shawn Young sit as an observer, not a Board member, and voicing interest in the development of an Indigenous Advisory Board. Martin noted that while no formal responses had been received from Canadian First Nations, some had given an acknowledgment of receipt. An additional

effort to communicate with the Ktunaxa Nation directly has not been returned, but a group within ECCC has a relationship and contacts that could be leveraged. Martin suggested the potential for moving on to other groups of candidates, however, it was decided that continuing to pursue Indigenous involvement first would be the best course of action. John Allis (IJC Advisor, US Section) and Ted shared that it can take time to form meaningful relationships with First Nations and Tribes, and that full Indigenous participation on the Board may not be possible until this has been achieved. In the meantime, Shawn Young would join as a Board observer and would be invited to attend the 2023 Annual Board Meeting in the fall. A list of other potential candidates has been developed but will be updated throughout the year based on new information.

## **7. Visualization Tool**

Martin provided an update on the Kootenay Lake Visualization Tool which is in the final stages of completion. He gave a brief overview of the tool's current functionality and noted that it is now hosted on the IJC's servers, though a website link to the tool still needs to be made. Once finished, a news release would be posted to the Board's website containing this link allowing for public access. The tool would also be explained and demonstrated at the Spring IJC Semi-Annual Appearance and the 2023 Public Meeting.

## **8. IJC Spring Semi-Annual Appearance**

Sonja presented the slides that had been put together for the Spring IJC Appearance in Washington, D.C. She reviewed those regarding the Board's Activities and Projects that would be discussed, including the Order Review and Climate Change Assessment, Board Expansion, Visualization Tool and Watershed Board scoping initiative. Feedback was requested by the end of day on April 18 to allow for changes to be made and their approval gained prior to the presentation in Washington.

## **9. 2023 Annual Board and Public Meetings**

The Annual Board and Public Meetings will be held in person at Nelson, BC for 2023. Scheduling and accommodation have been challenging but hotel rooms have been tentatively booked for September 19 to 21. The Annual Board Meeting would be held during the day on September 20, venue to be finalized. The Annual Public Meeting would be held the night of September 20 at the Nelson Visitor information Center as in previous years.

## **10. Round Table**

No additional discussion occurred. Martin advised the Board to expect communication of the spring rise declaration in the coming weeks.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 am.