

**SPRING QUARTERLY  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

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

**Webex Meeting**

**Monday June 8, 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 (absent)
<b>Secretariat</b>	Martin Suchy	Sonja Michelsen
<b>IJC Advisors</b>	Rob Caldwell Paul Allen	John Allis Jeff Kart
<b>Guests</b>	Kate Alexander (ECCC intern)	

**ACRONYMS**

IJC	International Joint Commission
IKLBC	International Kootenay Lake Board of Control
IWI	International Watershed Initiative
IWB	International Watershed Board
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
ECCC	Environment and Climate Change Canada

**Supporting Attachments** (in email)

- 1\_20230417 Kootenay Board Meeting Minutes\_v2.docx
- 2\_IKLBC\_2022\_Public\_Meeting\_Minutes\_DRAFT\_v3.docx
- 3\_IKLBC June 6 2023 – Hydrologic Conditions.pptx
- 4\_IKLBC response to IWB Letter DRAFT.docx
- 5\_DRAFT – IKLBC Climate Change Assessment SOW – 20230531.docx
- 6\_IKLBC\_Communication Plant DRAFT v3.docx

## **1. Welcome**

The virtual meeting, held using the Webex platform, was opened at 9:15 am by Col. Bullock (Board Co-Chair, US Section). Due to technical difficulties, the decision was made to switch from MS Teams to Webex. This change will be implemented for future meetings. Col. Bullock welcomed the attendees and Martin Suchy (Board Secretary, Canadian Section) introduced Kate Alexander, student intern at Environment and Climate Change Canada as a guest. Evan Friesenhan (Board Co-Chair, Canadian Section) moved to adopt the agenda and was seconded by Ted White (Board Member, Canadian Section). Col. Bullock asked if the Board had any adjustments to the minutes from the 2022 Annual Public Meeting in October 2022 or the April 2023 conference call, none were mentioned. Evan moved to approve both minutes and Ted seconded.

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

Martin Suchy summarized the current basin conditions with a special focus on the early snow melt. Since the beginning of May temperatures have been warmer than normal and precipitation has been lower than normal. Snowpacks in the basin saw a rapid and early melt and have since been depleted. The freshet peak was reached last week with flow decreasing and Kootenay Lake level is expected to hit 1743.32 feet sooner than normal. Grohman Narrows is in control this week. BC Hydro is not expecting Duncan dam to reach full pool this year. There are no flood advisories in the region. Drought conditions are dry to very dry on both sides of the border. An El Niño is developing, and a hot, dry summer is predicted (ECCC, NOAA) for most of Canada and the US.

Col. Bullock asked if this weather prediction is of any potential concern to the level of the water. Martin responded that the low flows should benefit the kokanee in the fall, as the risk of dewatering the redds in the spring will decrease. Local interest and input on the lake level this year will be of high importance. No other questions were asked.

## **3 Pilot-International Watershed Board (IWB)**

Col. Bullock stated that the Board has the intent to continue with the discussion on the IWB, however the board would like to wait until more progress has been made on the other projects / issues (indigenous engagement, board expansion, basin climate change vulnerability assessment and the Order review) have been addressed. An expected timeline was not given. The secretaries have drafted a letter to the IJC to state the position of the board. Col. Bullock and Evan Friesenhan said that they are ready to sign the letter and it will be sent off soon. John Allis emphasized the momentum this project has at the IJC and that he does not know what the commissioners will want to do. There will likely be a discussion on the letter once it is received by the IJC. Martin Suchy suggested editing the work plan to capture the Board's decision, this was supported by Col. Bullock.

## **4. Climate Change IWI Project**

The IJC's draft scope of work (SoW) for the climate change assessment has been received by the Board. Col. Bullock stated that he has no issue moving forward with the vulnerability assessment as described in the SoW. Sonja recapped a meeting the secretaries had with advisors the week prior. The IJC and Board's scope of work were noted to be fairly similar. They both include two phases, scoping and then execution. The Board had originally planned to have two separate contracts for the phases, however the

IJC is proposing to put both under one contract. This would reduce the admin, paperwork and logistics required. The Board is hoping that the IJC will take the lead on logistics. At the aforementioned meeting there was talk about funding for this project not coming from the IWI, but instead other IJC sources.

Martin Suchy added that the tasks associated with Phases 1 and 2 will need to be flushed out and the specific objectives and deliverables determined. The IJC Canadian section has an MoU with national Research Council (NRC) and they may provide a method to get some of the work done. Martin Suchy expressed some reservations on how the work that will be done by NRC. Questions regarding the use of subcontractors and model frameworks by NRC were raised. Martin said that he and Sonja will be working on the SoW document before handing back over to the IJC. The IJC agreed that the questions raised need to be answered. The plan proposed is to move forward with Casey Brown collaborating with NRC. Col. Bullock acknowledged that the path for execution requires groundwork but is happy with the progress.

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

Col. Bullock stated the intention of the board is to move ahead with expansion of the Board with Native American/Indigenous tribes. He explained that outreach to indigenous groups has occurred and that there have been some responses, primarily on the US side. The Kootenai Tribe has communicated that they will be sending an observer. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) would like to meet again to discuss. There may be some confusion as to the purpose of the engagement. Col. Bullock mentioned that he and Sonja were crafting a formal letter from the Board to provide CSKT with clarity on the situation. The Board raised concern on the potential for uneven representation due to the current lack of communication with the Canadian Bands. Martin Suchy acknowledged that reaching out to the Canadian Bands is a priority and he will be following up with them soon. Col. Bullock mentioned the need for a discussion about how to proceed if no responses are received or interest in participation is not given. No plans for these are to be made yet. The board was in agreement that before any non-indigenous groups were contacted about board expansion, that attempts to reach indigenous groups must be made first.

## **6. Communications Plan**

Col. Bullock started the Communication Plan topic by saying that he believes the current draft plan is solid but ambitious. He outlined a potential matrix that will include who the key audiences are, how often engagement should occur, what the form of engagement is and who will take the lead on each engagement. He mentioned that staff funding on the US side is low and that there is a possibility that the Canadian side may have to take more responsibility.

At this time Col. Bullock had to leave the meeting to go to a congressional testimony. He thanked the board as this will be his last full meeting before Col. Kathryn Sanborn takes over as Chair of the US Section on August 1. Col. Celio Biering, Col. Bullock's deputy was present to listen to the remainder of the meeting.

Martin Suchy agreed that the Communications Plan is ambitious and explained that it was primarily based on the Osoyoos Board's plan that had recently been developed. The Board asked how their plan compared with others from boards, AOs or IWB's across the country. The consensus from the IJC was that there should be consistency, however each one should be tailored to the specific board's needs.

Evan Friesenhan enquired on the availability of communication expertise to help get key messages across in a more accessible, digestible, and effective way. The IJC responded by saying it does not typically offer support for communications and that it is typically the Board, namely the secretaries, that take on most of the responsibilities. There is potential to hire outside resources and if the Board needs support, to ask for it. A separate call with the secretaries and the IJC communications staff focusing on the process and roles for communications was proposed and supported by board members.

Martin Suchy stressed that the current plan is a draft that they are open for discussion, comments and simplifications moving forward and would specifically like help with matrix development. MS asked the IJC if there is a framework available for them to follow. The answer was yes, there are models and guidance documents available. The IJC is also working on a communications policy, but it is not yet ready.

As part of the Coms Plan, the Board needs to develop a list of FAQs. Which would be added to the website.

The technicality of news released was then discussed. The consensus was that they are good at current level, but that they could include more explanations (i.e. how does Grohman Narrows work). Genevieve Asselin (IJC Canadian Section) was identified as a communications expert that is a good resource to help simplify technical jargon into plain language.

Martin Suchy stated that there will be a news release on the visualization tool demonstration in the coming weeks. There will be a demonstration on the visualization tool at the public meeting in September.

Martin Suchy updated the board on the subscription-based pilot. There are plans to have it set up in time for and to highlight it at the public meeting. A suggestion was made to advertise it in the public meeting notice.

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

The Annual Board and Public Meetings will be held in person at Nelson, BC on September 19, 2023. The Board meeting will be held from 9:30am to 3:00 pm at the Hume Hotel Emporium Room, while the Public meeting will be from 6:30pm to 8pm at Nelson Visitor Center. The public meeting will be held both in person and online. The online platform has yet to be confirmed and there is talk about having IT support present to reduce the risk of technical difficulties. Martin Suchy asked the board for suggestions on where the field trip will go on the Wednesday. Possible locations being considered are Corra Linn dam, Nelson gage and Queens Bay gage. The meeting briefing book should be out for early September. Fall appearances are planned for the week of Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>.

## **10. Round Table**

No additional discussion occurred.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:36 am.

## Action Items

1. Secretaries: IWB Letter to IJC Commissioners
2. Secretaries: News Releases:
  - a. Post freshet peak
  - b. Visualization Tool
3. Secretaries and IJC Advisors: CCVA, finalizing the tasks, objectives and deliverables.
4. Secretaries: Update ICLBC workplan to reflect future International Watershed Board scoping work following completion of current tasks.
5. Martin: to follow up with Canadian indigenous groups re board expansion
6. Martin, Annual Board and Public Meeting and Field Trip:
  - a. Prepare itinerary
  - b. Guest speakers for Board meeting
  - c. Prepare agenda
  - d. Prepare briefing book
7. Secretaries: complete minutes this meeting
8. Secretaries: post all approved minutes to board website
9. Sonja, draft formal letter to Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) on engagement
10. Secretaries to follow up with IJC staff about ICLBC subscription based email notifications like IOLBC.