

**INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION**

***Minutes – Executive Meeting, July 19, 2022***

The International Joint Commission (IJC) met in virtual Executive Session on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, from 9:00 am to 5:25 pm. EST, with Pierre Béland in the Chair.

**COMMISSIONERS**

Rob Sisson	Acting Chair, U.S. Section
Pierre Béland	Chair, Canadian Section
Henry Lickers	Commissioner, Canadian Section
Merrell-Ann Phare	Commissioner, Canadian Section
Lance Yohe	Commissioner, U.S. Section

**SECTION OFFICES**

Susan Daniel	Secretary/Legal Advisor, U.S. Section
Christopher Wilkie	Secretary, Canadian Section
Genevieve Asselin	Public Affairs Advisor, Canadian Section
Rob Caldwell	Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Mark Colosimo	Director of Science and Engineering, U.S. Section
Jennifer Brebner	Web Administrator
Kevin Bunch	Writer-Communications Specialist, U.S. Section (contractor)
Shannon Bushinsky	Policy & Communications Intern, Canadian Section
Christina Chiasson	Junior Policy & Communications Analyst, Canadian Section
Oliver Dumville	Senior Policy Advisor
Antionette Dunston	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Alexandria Farrell	IWI Student, Canadian Section
David Fay	Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Kathey-Lee Gavin	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
Adam Greeley	AAAS Fellow, U.S. Section
Shenice Gross	Network Administrator, U.S. Section (contractor)
Eric Hembrough	Intern, U.S. Section
Jeff Kart	Executive Editor, IJC Newsletters, U.S. Section (contractor)
Erika Klyszejko	Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Jeff Laberge	Information Management Analyst, Canadian Section
Michael Laitta	Senior Physical Science Adviser/GIS Coordinator, U.S. Section
Sabrina Lao	GIS Student, Canadian Section
Catherine Lee-Johnston	Environmental Officer, Canadian Section
Brian Maloney	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Sydney McRae	Policy & Communications Intern, Canadian Section
Diane Moczula	Junior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section
Robert Phillips	Senior Water Quality and Ecosystem Adviser, Canadian Section
Isabelle Reid	Executive Assistant, Canadian Section
Anvi Solanki	AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Section
Derek Spelay	Administrative Assistant, Canadian Section

Ed Virden	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
John Yee	Chief, IM and IT Services, Canadian Section
Shane Zurbrigg	Legal Advisor, Canadian Section

### **GREAT LAKES REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF**

David Burden	Director
Heather Stirratt	Director
Antonette Arvai	Physical Scientist
Raj Bejankiwar	Physical Scientist
Jennifer Boehme	Physical Scientist
Mark Burrows	Physical Scientist
Rajendra Poudel	Economist
Diane Varosky	Administrative Coordinator
Allison Voglesong-Zejnati	Communications Specialist (contractor)
John Wilson	Physical Scientist
Rachel Wyatt	GLRO Communications Officer

## **1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved.

## **2. COORDINATED CALENDAR**

Commissioners agreed to not hold a September executive meeting and will handle matters that require action during C5 calls and by polling. Secretaries will be confirming availability of governments for the semi-annual meeting the week of October 17.

## **3. COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES**

Commissioners were apprised of ongoing and planned communications activities and updated on social media and newsletter analytics.

To help shape and inform the Communications Policy, IJC communications leads met in Ottawa on July 11-13 in Ottawa to develop a focused approach, identify clear priorities and ensure IJC's communications efforts are coordinated and adequately resourced. Outcomes and recommendations are being summarized in draft form and will be presented to the Secretaries and GLRO Director for review and comment. Work on the new IJC communications policy document is underway. The project will incorporate existing IJC policies and source documents with industry best practices to create a broad IJC Communications policy document. A draft

product is scheduled to be ready for review on September 15th and a final product by October 30th.

Staff continue to move forward with the consolidation of the IJC's two newsletters into a single newsletter. The consolidated newsletter will focus on the entire boundary including GLRO-related activities in the Great Lakes. On May 27, the Great Lakes Control Boards issued the first edition of the Tri-Board Tribune focused on the activities of the three primary Great Lakes water level boards (Superior, Niagara and Ontario). Newsletter readership has been growing since April, with an Open Rate of 42.5 percent for our April Great Lakes Connection issue, 48.1 percent for the May Water Matters and 40 percent for our June Great Lakes Connection. This is compared to a list average of 29.2 percent and a 28.77 percent industry average for government newsletters.

2020-2021 IJC Activities Report has been translated into French and is being reviewed. Next steps include graphic design, final approvals, posting on the IJC website and amplification via IJC channels and contact lists including MPs in IJC basins.

#### **4. INTERNATIONAL LAKE CHAMPLAIN/RICHELIEU RIVER BOARD STUDY**

Commissioners were apprised of recent developments with the Study Board's June 2022 final Report and preparation for the Commission's final report to Governments. A draft news release for the LCRR Final Report and recommendations, list of Data Products and schedule for public hearings was reviewed.

With respect to the data products resulting from the LCRR study, Commissioners requested clarification on the scope of data management, ownership, data sharing and data use and prepare a briefing note for the fall executive.

Commissioners approved the strategy for the IJC public hearings in the LCRR basin to be held in September.

Commissioners look forward to acknowledging the hard work of the study and to thank the LCRR board and associates, as well as the parties, at the semi-annual in October.

#### **5. INTERNATIONAL ST. MARY - MILK RIVERS STUDY**

Commissioners received an update on study activities including communications committee and technical work group formation, and public and Indigenous engagement activities.

Commissioners approved the study Board's work plan for posting to the study Board website. The posting of the work plan to the study Board's website will be accompanied by a news release, a public comment period and a public webinar. The public webinar is tentatively scheduled for August 4th.

Dr. Josh Valder was appointed as the new U.S. study manager on July 8.

Staff reported that the study board had its first basin tour from June 8 through 10, their first indigenous advisory group information session on June 2 and had their first Public Advisory Group meeting on May 12. Staff also noted that the study board had two identical initial Technical Working Group workshops held on May 24 and June 3.

## **6. INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD GOVERNANCE**

Commissioners were provided updates on the review of Souris River Board transition activities and provided guidance on the timing, milestones and sequencing preferences concerning the new board structure, its membership, committees.

## **7. PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS TO CONSIDER PROGRESS UNDER THE GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT**

Commissioners received an update on the status of IJC plans for collecting public input on the Progress Report of the Parties through in-person and virtual engagement activities, including at the Great Lakes Public Forum.

## **8. GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (GLAM)**

Commissioners received an update on the completion of the Public Comment period for the Phase 1 report, status of Phase 2, and discussed the importance of the Public Advisory Group. A letter to the GLAM in follow up to the Phase 1 public comments was approved along with a letter to Governments transmitting the Phase 1 report and providing information on Phase 2. The Phase 1 report was approved for posting on the IJC's website. along with public comments received.

Commissioners agreed to the creation of a permanent Advisory Group (AG) to the International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSRLB) provided feedback and asked staff to provide the proposal to the board and GLAM for input and consideration by Commissioners.

## **9. INDIGENOUS COLLABORATION TEAM**

Commissioners were provided an update on the Indigenous Collaboration Team's activities. Acknowledging that relationship building is key to moving this good work forward Commissioners agreed that staff should contact participants from the Commission's previous workshop with Indigenous community members.

## **10. TRANSBOUNDARY FLOOD-DROUGHT UPDATE**

Commissioners received an update on transboundary flooding and drought conditions in basins in which IJC works. Commissioners were briefed on Commissioner Yohe's tour of the Rainy-Lake of the Woods region during the flooding this summer and its current conditions. Commissioners were informed that the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board will host two listening sessions, August 10 & 11 in International Falls, MN & Fort Frances, ON with a binational presence.

## **11. INTERNATIONAL RED RIVER WATERSHED BOARD**

Staff discussed the board's next steps on activities including the board's work plan. Commissioners indicated they would like to keep the board moving forward on this. There is an upcoming board meeting in August where more detailed discussion and guidance will be given to the board.

Commissioners directed staff to make sure the revised work plan is consistent with the new directive and to conduct a gap analysis between the two documents.

Nutrient management strategy- The Commission is awaiting an official letter from governments.

## **12. OUTSTANDING CORRESPONDENCE, ACTION ITEMS**

Commissioners reviewed outstanding correspondence and action items.

## **13. ORAL UPDATES**

- A.** International Watersheds Initiative – Staff provided an update on discussions with governments on the International Watershed Board designation process and IWI project planning.
- B.** International Kootenay River Board of Control - Staff provided an update to Commissioners on Kootenay Board activities, including possible board expansion, finalizing the board's information paper providing a recommendation to the Commission their views on reviewing the Commission's 1938 Order
- C.** St. Croix River Dam Decommissioning – The Commissioners were briefed by staff that the project has been delayed for a year.
- D.** Poplar River - Staff will continue to address questions raised by governments with respect to recommendations for IJC involvement in water quality reporting in the Poplar River basin.

## **14. OTHER BUSINESS**

The meeting was adjourned with no other business.

## **DECISIONS TAKEN VIA POLLING**

### Decisions to be recorded in the minutes of the July 19, 2022, Executive meeting

On May 26, 2022, the Commission approved restructuring of the International Souris River Board comprised of 14 members, including the addition of Aquatic Ecosystem Health Co-chairs as two additional board members, as well as the proposed committee/subcommittee structure. Staff is to develop a letter for Commissioners' approval, regarding announcing to the board and governments the approved structural decision and implementation timeline this fall with the long-term goal of continuing to monitor and work with the new board and committees/subcommittees regarding the new board structure's effectiveness and adaptively managing remaining concerns or emerging issues.

On September 7, 2022, a quorum of Commissioners approved the announcement letter to the ISRB Co-chairs announcing to the board and governments the restructured ISRB.

Chair Beland dissented and issued a separate report.

### **Science Advisory Board Research Coordination Committee**

On June 20, 2022, Commissioners approved the appointment of Mr. Eric Boisvert as a Canadian member of the Science Advisory Board Research Coordination Committee (SAB-RCC) for a 3-year term starting July 1, 2022 until June 30, 2025.

On June 1, 2022, Commissioners approved the following SAB-RCC appointments:

- Dr. Val Klump as a US member for a two-year period retroactively starting March 14, 2022 and ending March 13, 2024.
- Mr. Sérgio Paulo as a Canadian member for a two-year period starting June 1, 2022 and ending May 31, 2024.

### **International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board, International Niagara Board of Control, International Lake Superior Board of Control**

On June 1, 2022, Commissioners approved the following appointments:

- Brigadier General Kimberly A. Peeples as the U.S. Co-chair of the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSLRB), the International Niagara Board of Control (INBC), and the International Lake Superior Board of Control (ILSBC) for a three-year term effective June 1, 2022 through May 31, 2025, or until posted to a new command by USACE, whichever occurs first.
- Reappoint of Mr. Anthony “Tehara’tats” David as a U.S. member of the International Lake Ontario - St. Lawrence River Board for a three-year term retroactive from February 1, 2022 through January 31, 2025.

### **International Red River Watershed Board**

On May 26, 2022, Commissioners approved a revised Directive for IRRWB.

### **International Souris River Board**

On May 19, 2022, Commissioners approved the appointment of Dr. Bruce Davison as a Canadian member of the International Souris River Board (ISRB) for a term of one year starting May 19, 2022 until May 18, 2023, or until the ISRB governance review is complete (likely no later than December 2022), whichever comes first.

### **International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board**

On May 14, 2022, Commissioners approved a revised temporary order for Rainy Namakan to provide the Water Levels Committee with the authority to deviate from the rule curves and all gates open levels over the next two months to better respond to flooding impacts, both upstream and downstream of the two control structures in the system.

On May 19th Commissioners approved the appointment of Karen Cederwall as a Canadian member of the IRLWWB Adaptive Management Committee retroactively for a three-year term, effective April 1, 2021, until March 31, 2024.

### **IJC Letter on Selenium Contamination**

On May 13, 2022, Commissioners approved a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau and President Biden, cc: Minister Joly and Secretary Blinken on selenium contamination of the Elk River, Lake Koochanusa, and the Kootenai River.

### **Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management (GLAM) Committee**

On May 19, 2022, Commissioners approved the appointment of Mr. David Coplestone as a Canadian member of the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management (GLAM) Committee for a three-year term, starting May 19, 2022, until May 18, 2025.

On April 20, 2022, Commissioners approved a revised standard response to letters concerning water levels on the Great Lakes. A draft was first shared at the April 4, 2022 Executive Meeting.

**Canada Water Resources Association**

On April 11, 2022 Commissioners approved a letter of congratulations to the CWRA on celebrating its 75th anniversary



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Christopher Wilkie  
Secretary  
Canadian Section



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Susan Daniel  
Secretary  
U.S. Section