

2021 ANNUAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

International Kootenay Lake Board of Control

MS Teams virtual platform

Wednesday, 22 September 2021

1:00 – 4:00 PM (PDT)

Participants

	Canada	United States
Chair	David Hutchinson	Colonel Alexander Bullock
Members	Ted White	Kyle Blasch
Secretariat	Martin Suchy	Ken Brettmann
IJC Commissioners	Pierre Béland	Jane Corwin Lance Yohe
IJC Advisors and Staff	Rob Caldwell Paul Allen	Mark Colosimo (absent) Adam Greeley Jeff Kart
Guests	Shannon Price (Fortis BC) Gillian Kong (BC Hydro) Roy Batholomay (USGS, Idaho Water Science Center) Dan Egolf (FortisBC) Brad Stykel (FortisBC) Josh Cummings (U.S. Dept. of State) Felicia Minnotti (Global Affairs Canada) Emmanuelle Johnston (ECCC)	

1. Welcome and Introductions and Agenda Review

The virtual meeting held using the Teams platform was opened at 1:00 PM by Dave Hutchinson (Board Chair, Canadian Section). Dave provided some welcoming remarks and introductions of the board members and IJC Commissioners Pierre Beland, Jane Corwin, and Lance Yohe, who were also in attendance.

2. Review of Agenda

The draft agenda was reviewed and accepted.

3. Approval of 2020 Board and Public Meeting Minutes

Dave asked the Board if there were any revisions or updates to the draft Board and public meeting minutes from 2020. No changes or revisions were proposed. Board and public meeting minutes were approved with a voice vote of Board members.

4. Hydrologic Conditions, Order Compliance, Dam Operations, & Applicant Report

4.1 Hydrologic Conditions 2021 – Order Compliance

Mr. Suchy (Canadian Section Secretary) reviewed the Applicants IJC rule curve compliance and provided a 2020-2021 hydrology year-in-review. The past year was fairly benign hydrologically and Fortis BC did not have trouble meeting the Order requirements. There were no exceedances in the spring during the drawdown period. Minimum lake level was reached on April 1, 2021 (1,738.6 feet), Corra Linn Dam was controlling outflow from the lake at this time. The Board made the Spring Rise Declaration on April 21st, which triggered the rule curve to increase using the lowering formula. Except for a couple of days, Grohman Narrows was in control of lake outflows during the freshet period. Maximum lake level was reached on June 5th (1,743.3 feet).

Snowpack in the Kootenay basin was average to slightly above average at the onset of the freshet mostly because of a very wet and cooler than average February. Precipitation in other key snow building months, December, January, March, and April was mostly below average throughout the basin. Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) in the Kootenay Basin was about 110-120% of average in Canada and closer to average in U.S. A snowpack of 100-120% of normal is typically enough to present a flood threat, but not enough to guarantee a flood. In such a year, floods could happen because of intense heatwaves, and/or rain on snowmelt events. However, this year the basin was spared any flooding, with warm temperatures from April through July but very dry conditions during this period. An intense heat dome in late June resulted in record high temperatures throughout much of the basin for several days, but snowpack was sufficiently diminished by then such that rises in basin streamflow stayed below flood levels.

Mr. Suchy presented an updated plot of historical Kootenay Lake maximum and minimum levels before and after the construction of Duncan and Libby Dams. He indicated that the peak lake

level continues to be significantly lower than in the past, due to the dredging of Grohman Narrows (1940's) and, more significantly, due to the construction of the two upstream Columbia River Treaty dams, Duncan (1967) and Libby Dams (1972). The addition of flood risk reduction storage at these dams has, on average, reduced the annual peak stage of Kootenay Lake by about 6 feet.

4.2 USACE Libby Dam Operations

Mr. Brettmann (US Section Secretary) reviewed Libby Dam operations. Construction of Libby Dam was allowed per the Columbia River Treaty and is operated for multiple purposes that include hydropower generation, flood control, recreation, and ecosystem needs. The reservoir was drafted per the water supply forecasts over the winter and early spring, reservoir draft was consistent with the water supply forecasts that were close to average throughout the drawdown period. The minimum elevation of Lake Kootenay was 2,401.02 feet on April 6, 2021. Maximum inflow was about 63 kcfs and maximum outflow was 25 kcfs as part of the sturgeon augmentation flows released from May 6 through June 3. A maximum reservoir elevation was reached on July 24 at 2453.9 feet.

4.3 Applicant – Corra Linn Dam Operations and Spill Gate Project

Shannon Price (Operations Manager at Fortis BC) provided a review of Corra Linn Dam operations, reviewing the winter peak, spring minimum and freshet peak lake levels. The peak freshet lake elevation was near normal in 2021, compared to higher elevations in recent years. Ms. Price also indicated outflow from the dam was in freefall starting just after the declaration of spring rise (declared April 21) through early June. Ms. Price mentioned that high lake inflows occurred in late June due to the heat dome but that there were no adverse impacts to lake levels or power generation.

Ms. Price provided a project status update on the Corra Linn Spillway Gate Replacement Project. Ms. Price indicated the project completion is still slated for May 5, 2022. Work on gate 4 is progressing well. She mentioned that the concealed components supporting gate 3 need replacement and that there is a need to inspect the concealed components associated with gates 1 and 2. She indicated that Fortis BC estimates that an additional 10 to 12 weeks would need to be added to the schedule if the remaining three sets of components need to be replaced.

Ms. Price indicated that preventative maintenance on the Queen's Bay and Nelson hydrometric gauges is scheduled twice annually and occurred during the summer of 2021 with another trip planned for the fall. Furthermore, for 2020, FortisBC made a \$30,000 USD payment to Idaho farmers in July 2021 to offset additional pumping costs.

4.4 BC Hydro Kootenay Lake and Duncan Dam Operations

Gillian Kong (BC Hydro) reviewed the Kootenay Basin weather and hydrologic conditions for the current water year. She indicated the northern parts of the basin were generally wetter, and it was progressively drier further south. Snowmelt was accelerated in the spring due to warmer

than normal conditions with record high heat in late June. Most snow pillows ran out of snow by late June.

Ms. Kong then reviewed Duncan Dam operations. As is typical, the reservoir was drafted to near-empty and refilled to near-full in the summer. The reservoir typically drafts some in the late summer, drafts minimally in the fall during kokanee spawning, and then completes the draft in the early spring upon the completion of kokanee spawning. The maximum reservoir elevation was 1,891.8 feet in early August, 0.2 feet from full pool. BC Hydro directs water management at Corra Linn Dam and the Kootenay Canal, under an operating agreement with Fortis BC. There were no unusual operations this past year.

Ms. Kong also spoke about operations at Kootenay Lake to target a stable level of about 1,742 feet mid-September to mid-October to protect shore spawning Kokanee in the west arm of Kootenay Lake. This operation has been put in place in suspected years of peak spawning including 2021. This operation is found to be effective but does not eliminate Kokanee dewatering in the spring.

5. Round Table

No round table issues were raised by those in attendance. Following the Round Table, FortisBC and BCHydro guests departed the meeting.

6. Business Items

6.1 Kyle Blasch Resignation

Kyle Blasch (US Section Board member) has informed the Board that he has taken a new job within the USGS and is no longer the Director of the Idaho Water Science Center. Mr. Blasch mentioned that based on history, the Director of the USGS Idaho Water Science Center has served on the Kootenay Board. Mr. Blasch needs to resign from the Kootenay Board given his departure from the Director's position. Roy Bartholomay is the new Director of the Idaho Water Science Center. Mr. Blasch recommended that Mr. Bartholomay be nominated by the Board to serve on the Kootenay Board. The other Board members indicated that they concurred with this recommendation. Ken Brettmann indicated that the next step would be for Board secretaries to send an email to the IJC Secretaries, Susan Daniel and Christopher Wilke, with a recommendation to nominate Mr. Bartholomay to the Kootenay Board, and include Mr. Blasch's resignation letter and Mr. Bartholomay's resume.

6.2 Information Paper Update

Ken Brettmann gave an update on the Information Paper, which was initiated about 18 months ago due to a request from the IJC to all Boards to review their Orders and provide a recommendation on possible Order review. Several drafts of the paper have circulated within the Board, the last version is from September of 2020. The paper is still currently undergoing review. Mr. Brettmann thought that finalization might be possible by the end of 2021. The Information Paper will identify existing information and where there are information gaps, which can be used to guide studies that may be needed to help make a recommendation on Order review.

Mark Colosimo said that the mandate to Boards to review their Orders dates to 1997. Mr. Colosimo reminded Board members that they need to act in their personal capacity on the Board and not as a representative of their agency as they consider potential sensitivities with a review of the Information Paper. Dave Hutchinson questioned whether any review of the Kootenay Order should wait until the Columbia River Treaty negotiations have been finalized. Martin Suchy and Col. Bullock both mentioned that the road map for starting a review of the Order is unclear with little precedent. Mr. Colosimo mentioned that about four or five Order reviews have occurred over the past 20 years, these often take four or five years to complete. Additional funding from IWI would likely be required. A review of the Osoyoos Order occurred in the last ten years; the effort was on the order of \$400,000 to \$500,000.

6.3 Public Correspondences

Martin Suchy mentioned that the Board has received very little public correspondence over the past year. The most significant correspondence was with the RDCK (Regional District Central Kootenay), a regional governance board in British Columbia. A discussion of this correspondence was covered in the next agenda item.

6.4 RDCK Delegation Request

The RDCK has requested a delegation from the Board to attend an upcoming RDCK Board meeting and to explore options on how local government can be more involved in discussions related to management and ultimately, the stewardship of Kootenay Lake. The Board is tentatively scheduled to appear at the November RDCK Board meeting, but Mr. Suchy said that he will check with the RDCK to see if they want to postpone the Kootenay Board's appearance if the Information Paper is not finished by their November Board meeting.

6.5 Considerations for Board Expansion

The IJC has asked the Kootenay and other Boards about possible expansion, with more focus on local board members and tribal/indigenous members. Mark Colosimo said that the IJC wants to hear the Kootenay Board's thoughts on expansion. Rob Caldwell mentioned that it might be difficult to get international parody on this given a smaller public interest in Idaho. Perhaps a steering committee could be formed to provide guidance on this. Dave Hutchinson suggested that perhaps we could start by just adding one additional member from each country. Col. Bullock was fine with adding Board members but said that we need to be selective on who is picked. Added Board members have the potential to slow down Board activities and misdirect the Board to items that aren't part of the Order. Col. Bullock asked if decisions typically need to occur via consensus. Mr. Colosimo said that the Board decides by consensus, but there can be exceptions if consensus is not reached. Commissioner Beland said that the IJC favors Board expansion to bring in additional knowledge to the Boards and local expertise. An action item for the Board secretaries is to start to investigate potential members that could be added to the Kootenay Board, with an emphasis on local candidates.

6.6 Frequency of Board Meetings

The IJC has asked the Kootenay Board to review meeting frequency for adequacy. Most Boards have regularly scheduled meetings more than once annually. Rob Caldwell mentioned that

climate change is driving the need for many Boards to meet multiple times per year. Additionally, social media generates more public interest than in the past, which can increase workload for Boards. Dave Hutchinson suggested adding a meeting around the spring freshet, and another meeting perhaps in early summer. Col. Bullock said that he could support more meetings, but perhaps reduce the individual meeting length. An action item for the Secretaries is to recommend a schedule of potential additional meetings to the Board.

Agenda Items 6.7 through 6.10

There was insufficient time to discuss agenda items 6.7 through 6.10. A meeting will be scheduled in November specifically to go through these agenda items.

7. Preparation for Public Meeting

Dave Hutchinson reviewed the agenda and presentation planned for the evening virtual public meeting.

8. Adjourn

Dave Hutchinson adjourned the meeting on schedule.