

**International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board  
DRAFT Summary of Discussion for Review**

**Wednesday August 10, 2022  
2:00pm - 3:30pm CT (3:00pm-4:30pm ET)**

Virtual Meeting  
Chair: Mike Goffin

**1. Welcome and Administration**

**U.S. Member Participants**

COL Karl Jansen (Board Co-Chair)  
Theresa Haugen  
Mike Hirst  
Doug Franchot  
Pam Tomevi  
Shelly Patten  
Jim Stark

Scott Jutila (Secretary; Engineering Advisor)  
Abigail Moore (Secretary; Engineering Advisor)  
Rebecca Seal-Soileau (Secretary; Engineering Advisor)

**International Joint Commission**

Lance Yohe, US Commissioner  
Merrell-Ann Phare, Canadian Commissioner  
Pierre Béland, Canadian Commissioner  
Mark Gabriel, US Engineering Advisor  
Rob Caldwell, Canadian Engineering Advisor  
Kathey-Lee Galvin IJC Communications Advisor  
Alexandria Farrell, Canadian IJC Support  
Eric

**Canadian Member Participants**

Mike Goffin (Board Co-Chair)  
Todd Sellers  
Greg Chapman  
Karen Cederwall  
Megan Garner  
Lucas King (alternate for Chief Perrault)  
Wellsley Hamilton (Secretary)

**Additional Participants**

Felicia Minotti (GAC)  
Joel Wessman (GAC)  
Carla Torchia (ECCC)  
Ryan Maki (AMC Co-chair)  
Teika Newton (AMC Co-chair)  
Mike Kennedy (MPCA)  
Joel Groten (USGS)

The agenda for this meeting was approved. The June 22, 2022 meeting summary was circulated for Board approval. Board members were asked to submit any changes to the Secretaries by end of the next week. Action items in the action log were noted as complete or in progress.

**ACTION:** Board members to submit any changes to June Meeting Minutes to secretaries by August 19.

## 2. Observations and Follow-Up from Resource Management

Mike Hirst spoke about the agricultural runoff concerns brought up by the CAG meeting. The CAG was exploring this topic to determine whether “this is a problem in the basin”. The CAG would also benefit from understanding what different agencies do to regulate and inform agricultural practices. The CAG may wish to welcome various agencies to provide presentations at their meetings to understand the issue further.

The discussion shifted to controlling phosphorus inputs from various sources. While Minnesota has put a Total Maximum Daily Load in place, in Canada ECCC stated that moving forward with nutrient targets would require Provincial support.

It was noted that the Board no longer has a member affiliated with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and they did not attend the Resource Management Agency meeting earlier in the week. Board members raised concerns that during the IJC’s search for a Canadian Board member MECP communicated that they are continuing to face more and more resource pressures and need to ensure the work they do has direct benefit to the Ministry and their Mandate. MECP encouraged the IJC to consider approaching them again in a few years. The AEHC Co-chairs stated that as a key regulatory agency involved in water management in the basin, there is strong need for MECP membership on the Board; it would be challenging to fulfill the Board’s directives without someone with direct knowledge and linkages to agency. The Board recommended elevating correspondence on this issue to the level of Deputy Minister. The Canadian IJC Advisor suggested that the Board should emphasize why it is important for there to be a member of the Board affiliated with MECP and to make a recommendation to IJC.

**ACTION:** Canadian Secretary to draft letter to the Deputy Minister of MECP about the vacant Board membership for Board consideration.

## 3. Committee Work Planning Updates

- Adaptive Management Committee

Teika Newton and Ryan Maki briefing the Board on the Adaptive Management Committee’s work and outcomes of the Committee meeting that took place earlier this week.

Specifically, the AMC continues to work with USACE to develop performance indicators for a decisions support tool. The tool will support the AMC’s rule curve review.

Work is also underway within ECCC to reallocate modelling capacity that will support AMC work on ....

During the AMC meeting, there was discussion about introducing Indigenous knowledge keepers when developing performance indicators for modelling work. In Canada, Indigenous communities have their own governance structures and approaches that run in parallel with western governance models. Ideally, the results of these processes is a harmonized product. IJC Commissioners commended the AMC for looking into the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge. The example of averaging socio-economic priorities similar to what was done by the IJC’s Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management Committee was raised by Commissioner Merrell-Ann Phare. She asked if there could be potential issues down the road trying to take a similar approach, for example would it ever be appropriate to average Indigenous rights-based performance indicators over other socio-economic performance indicators. Seeking legal counsel

on performance indicators and the potential tradeoffs would be beneficial. It was noted that consensus-based decision making would be key in this work to build trust during the development of any model. Lucas King stated that the inclusion of Indigenous values cannot be seen as an add-on, but rather a new or reworking of the current process. The need to include US Indigenous Nations in the development of performance indicators was also noted.

- Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee

The AEHC stated the approach for exceedance reporting is being reviewed. The AEHC noted it was reviewing their Terms of Reference and alignment with the Board Directive to ensure they are focused on the right deliverables. The AEHC stated that completion of the Objectives and Alerts project and the development of the binational core monitoring program remain top priorities. The AEHC also emphasized the role the Board can play in bringing agencies together when moving towards management practices.

- Engagement Committee

The Engagement Committee co-chair re-emphasized the inclusion of all Indigenous First Nations, Tribes, and Metis Nation in AMC work. The Committee is in a renewal phase and interested in input from the Board and IJC. The Engagement Committee was unable to meet this week, but plans to meet in the fall.

- Water Levels Committee- Community Listening Session Preparation

The WLC showed the recorded presentation that would be presented at the start of each community listening session in Fort Frances and International Falls. The focus of the listening sessions is to gain input from the public to inform the post flood analysis. Questions will be answered depending on topic, like complicated hydraulics between the pinch point and dam. What if scenario questions will not be answered during the listening session, as they form part of the broader post flood analysis.

A key message the Water Levels Committee hopes to convey is that the flood experienced this year was historic and could not have been prevented. The Rule Curves for Rainy and Namakan Lake are designed for low to moderate flood scenarios. The record rainfall in April was unprecedented in the recorded climate history of the basin and could not have been predicted.

A Board member mentioned, flooding is starting to subside on Rainy and Namakan lakes and people are starting to slowly work on recovery. While the Water Levels Committee for this Board is responsible for monitoring hydrologic conditions on Rainy and Namakan lakes and providing dam operators with direction to ensure the rule curves are followed, the Board's water quality mandate extends across the full Rainy-Lake of the Woods Basin. During the listening sessions it should be acknowledged that there is still significant flooding occurring on Lake of the Woods and it is still very much an emergency. The WLC agreed a statement at the beginning should be included to acknowledge the different flood scenarios people across the basin are dealing with.

A common item brought to the attention of WLC and IJC during the 2022 flood was the need for communication of roles and responsibilities in the basin. Typically, municipalities have their own protocols for emergency management but on the Ontario side there are a lot of unincorporated territories where there are no county or municipal governments. This was suggested as an argument for more Provincial Government involvement during a flood and on the Board. The opportunity to have someone from the IJC in the basin full-time to build public and indigenous relationships was also proposed.

The Board also discussed the possibility of changing the name of the Rule Curve. “High Flood Risk Rule Curve” creates the misperception that the Water Levels Committee has a tool that can prevent all floods.

Colonel Jansen made a special presentation at the end of the Water Levels Committee briefing. On behalf of the US Army Corps of Engineers Pam Tomevi, the US public member on the Water Levels, was awarded the Commander’s Award for Public Service for her dedication to supporting the WLC and answering the public’s questions in the basin.

#### 4. Outcomes of Wild Rice Mapping Work

Deferred.

**ACTION:** Wild Rice Mapping work be added as an Agenda item for a future Board meeting.

#### 5. Roundtable

- IJC Update

The IJC Advisors participated and shared pertinent information during the Committee meetings. Due to time constraints significant IJC updates would be shared with the Board in written format.

- Other Watershed Issues

The AMC invited Joel Groten of the USGS to present on a proposed flood mapping visualization tool. This proposal is to undertake a spinoff project from the 2022 bathymetric survey work that would utilize remaining US 2022 fiscal year funds.

Once developed, the flood mapping tool would be able to provide real-time interactive maps of expected flood conditions. The tool would be available online in a user-friendly format. Questions and comments on additional detail of the product could be brought to Julia Prokpec. The Board co-chairs found no concerns for AMC to proceed with work. The AMC would communicate with the Water Levels Committee and the Aquatic Ecosystem Health Committee on progress and to ensure alignment throughout the project.

**ACTION:** IJC to provide written update to Board.

#### 6. Closing Remarks

Co-chair Mike Goffin thanked the Board for participation and concluded the meeting at 4:00pm.

*Drafted by: Abigail Moore USACE, Wellsley Hamilton, ECCC, Scott Jutila USACE*