



International Souris River Board

Conference Call
Tuesday, April 25, 2013

Final Minutes

Attendees:

Board Members: Russell Boals, Todd Sando, Dennis Fewless, Gregg Wiche, Megan Estep, John Fahlman.

IJC Staff: Syed Moin

Support Staff: Mark Lee (MC&WS), Scott Jutila (US ACE), John-Mark Davies (WSA), Heather Duchscherer (ND Dept. of Health) and Bruce Holiday (EC)

Secretaries: Bob White and Girma Sahlu

Russell Boals called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. CST and asked if there were any changes to the draft agenda that was circulated before the conference call. No changes were made to the draft agenda.

1. Approval of Minutes from the April 9, 2013 Conference call.

The draft conference call minutes were approved as circulated.

Motion: Megan Estep moved to accept the minutes as presented. John Fahlman seconded.
Carried.

2. Follow-up Spring 2013 Flow Forecast and Flood Potential in the Souris River Basin

Saskatchewan - John Fahlman reported that April continues to be cold and the snow has disappeared in some parts of the basin leading to a lower flow forecasts. The drawdown targets for Rafferty and Alameda were reached a week ago, and minimal releases are being made to maintain a live stream for ecological reasons. The freshet is expected to start this week and the majority of the water is still in the upper portion of the basin according to a snow survey done last week. Rafferty and Alameda have been drawn down below what is required in the 1989 Agreement to accommodate flood waters. The new operating plan for Boundary shows an

estimated peak flow of 115 m³/s coming from Long Creek. Of this a maximum of 55 m³/s could be diverted into Rafferty. The remaining balance of 60 m³/s may be stored with a maximum spill of 30 m³/s. Rafferty and Alameda will hold all the inflows until local flow has subsided with the aim of reaching FSL by June 1st. Bob White asked for clarification regarding the peak release of 30 m³/s from Boundary. John Fahlman replied that he has not yet discussed the release with the US ACE. He also noted that Boundary is not a flood storage reservoir and has very limited capacity to store flood waters. If peak flows are higher than expected, the releases downstream will be relatively higher. Rafferty could take 50 m³/s for sure but anything in excess has to go downstream. John Fahlman mentioned he would work with the US ACE and the National Weather Service (NWS) regarding releases.

Bob White requested clarification regarding the role and responsibilities of the regulating agencies. For example the relation between NWS and ISRB's FFLC for information sharing among the various agencies in the basin during flooding. Russell Boals stated that the operating agencies are the Water Security Agency in Canada and the Army Core of Engineers in the US along with the NWS; these agencies are responsible for public notification. There was some uncertainty as to who sits on the regulators' calls. It was noted that there could be some reluctance from NWS to involve other entities regarding public notification as they operate on a real-time basis. The reluctance could be in part due to delays that result from involving many agencies at critical times. The NWS may view the involvement of numerous agencies as an extra burden. Further discussion is needed on how to involve the FFLC and the Board.

Russell Boals mentioned there are designated guidelines in the Operating Plan. Certainly, WSA and US ACE are the designated agencies and in addition a third party would be the State of North Dakota. John Fahlman asked Bob White to set up a call to clarify the issue. It was noted that if only the regulating agencies are involved, Manitoba would be left out.

Action: Bob White will arrange a call with the FFLC to discuss the communication issue.

North Dakota – Louise from the US ACE gave an update on Lake Darling and runoff conditions in North Dakota. Louise mentioned in April the outflow from Lake Darling was increased to 2600 cfs to lower the reservoir to 1592 ft which is lower than what was required by the 1989 Agreement. Flows have been reduced and the gates were closed April 25, 2103. No releases will be made until the local runoff is through the system. Russell Boals asked what was happening in the lower end of the pools complex and downstream of Lake Darling. Louise responded some tributaries have started to run but nothing major yet.

3. Public Consultation Stand-alone Report

POS Update – Bob White mentioned that he had sent the POS to Ted Yuzik, IJC. The IJC has sent a confirmation letter to Bob White acknowledging formal receipt of the POS. In addition, the POS was also presented to IJC Commissioners at the Washington, DC meeting on April 17, 2013. The Board has approved the POS prior to the public consultation. Russell Boals asked if the Board has any concerns or questions and whether the Board is comfortable with the POS and the steps taken so far. Syed Moin added that there was one major change in the final POS. The Board has moved from “medium” to “full” scope study. Russell Boals stated that the Board

should be comfortable with any change in the scope of the study. The Board agree to endorse a “full scope” POS for the Souris River.

4. Feedback from the IJC Appearance in Washington D.C.

Todd Sando provided a brief report on the IJC appearance. Todd presented the POS and Public Information Session to the IJC Commissioners. Those Commissioners who attended the appearance were very receptive to the presentation. Once approved by the Commissioners the POS would go to governments for further consideration and possible funding. Todd Sando asked Syed Moin about the Friday Governments’ Session. Syed Moin stated that Foreign Affairs and State Department have to come up with the funds. Congress might consider the \$2.1 million price tag to be high. Todd Sando was not sure where the money might come from. It was agreed Manitoba, Saskatchewan and North Dakota need to push governments for action. Russell Boals stated that the POS is doable relative to other proposals submitted to the IJC for funding at just over a million dollars per country. Todd Sando restated overall the presentation has gone well and the Commissioners were very receptive to the Board’s POS.

5. Other Business

Syed Moin mentioned that he has a stand-alone version of the POS that could be shared with the public as required. Bob White will respond to any public request regarding the POS. Russell Boals mentioned that he has received a hardcopy letter dated April 8, 2013 from an individual in Minot, ND by the name of Monte Reiner. The letter basically stated that Monte Reiner was unable to attend the public meeting and he has suggested that illegal drainage of farmland has contributed to the flooding problem in the basin.

Action: Girma Sahlu would send an acknowledgement letter. The response letter will mention that the Board would take into consideration the illegal drainage issue that the writer has raised.

Bob White asked if he should send response to all who sent him letters. Russell Boals stated that we should acknowledge all letters and asked Bob White to send him a draft letter for approval.

The next conference call was set for May 16, 2013 at 10:00 CST (11:00 CDT). Girma Sahlu mentioned that he will not be available on May 16 and asked if Bob White could setup the conference call. Russell Boals requested Bob White to arrange the next conference call on May 16, 2013 and Bob White agreed.

There was no Other Business.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m. on April 25, 2013.