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International Souris River Board

Conference Call  
September 17, 2013

**Final Minutes**

**Attendees:**

**Board Members:** Russell Boals, Todd Sando, Col. Daniel Koprowski, Dennis Fewless, Steve Robinson for Gregg Wiche, Megan Estep, John Fahlman, Nicole Armstrong, Mark Lee, John-Mark Davies

**IJC Staff:** Mark Colosimo, Syed Moin for Ted Yuzyk

**Support Staff:** Scott Jutila (US ACE).

**Secretaries:** Bob White and Girma Sahlu

Russell Boals called the meeting to order at 9:00 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. Board Positions to be Filled (status report)**

Currently, there are two vacant positions that need to be filled by Manitoba and Environment Canada (Bob Harrison and David Donald, respectively). Nicole Armstrong reported that Manitoba has proposed Mark Lee's nomination to the Board.

**2. IWI Strategic Projects**

ISRB has been instrumental in the Canada-US Data Harmonization Project and application of the SPARROW Model in the Souris River Basin. Syed Moin stated there were some challenges in reconciling the "Z axis or elevation coordinate" in the previous data harmonization work; and the work will continue as an IWI project. John Fahlman asked how long it will take to complete the data harmonization project. Russell Boals responded he was not sure but, it will be identified in the Data Harmonization Task Group's work plan. Mark Colosimo added the vertical datum issue has come up in the Lake of the Woods Basin, as well.

The second key project was the SPARROW Model which has made significant progress. The ISRB supports continued investment in the application of the model.

There was also discussion on the five key strategic areas identified in the IJC letter to the ISRB dated June 23, 2013 that recommended future IWI projects should include:

- aspects of climate change and its impact on the responsibilities of the Boards,
- the role and needs of adaptive management,
- water flow needs for fisheries,
- other significant water quality challenges beyond eutrophication that are shared, or
- the need to assess international water quality objectives.

The Board discussed the need to assess the existing water quality objectives, which have become out of date. John Fahlman suggested involving John-Mark Davies in the discussion regarding the water quality objectives. Nicole Armstrong agreed the water quality objectives are out of date and it is time to review them as an IWI project. R. Boals also added the water quality issue has come up again and again in previous Board meetings. Similar water quality issues are being discussed at the International Red River Board (IRRB) meetings, as well. There could be some synergy in involving the IRRB and engage them in the discussion for a joint project to address water quality issues in the Souris-Red River basins. The ISRB is comfortable moving in that direction. There will be a session on Strategic Projects at the fall IJC appearance in Ottawa.

### **3. POS (status report)**

Mark Colosimo provided an update on the Plan of Study (POS) that was submitted to governments at the end of 2012. On the U.S. State Department is talking to other federal departments. Nothing has happened other than discussions among the various federal agencies at this time. Syed Moin also reported that the POS was sent to Foreign Affairs and just as in the US, there are no new developments to report on at this time. M. Colosimo noted that the POS will be on the agenda for the governments' session of the IJC Fall meeting in Ottawa. Todd Sando asked how the POS could move forward given the response from governments so far. R. Boals responded that it depends on the political will of governments. Tim Fay expressed concern with the limited progress and suggested that the Task Force could have a face-to-face meeting to discuss some supportive work under the POS. T. Fay mentioned that there is some value in doing some of the technical work (smaller activities) now while we are waiting for approval from governments. If we could get started with minor tasks that would encourage government to join in later and could provide us some leveraging opportunities.

Syed Moin talked about the activities that he has identified in his "White Paper" that could be initiated in support of the POS (see attachment). R. Boals suggested including the work plan on the agenda for the Task Force meeting. Some of the work identified in the White Paper is part of the Board's reference. S. Moin mentioned there will be a webinar at the end of the month on how to move forward on some of the topics mentioned in the White Paper. Scott Jutila will share the hydrology study conducted by the US ACE (could mail it as a DVD, if needed). Scott will send out a Doodle Poll (sign-in) and extend the webinar to review S. Moin's White Paper.

#### **4. IJC Appearance in Ottawa (fall 2013)**

R. Boals extended invitation to Board members to attend the IJC Fall meeting in Ottawa. T Sando will not be able to attend in person but, will join via a conference call. R. Boals mentioned he would share the presentation deck with Board members for their review and comments.

#### **5. Other Business**

There was no other business.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m. CST on September 17, 2013.