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International Souris River Board

## Conference Call

April 5, 2017

### **Board Members:**

Garland Erbele, Scott Gangl, John-Mark Davies, Lorinda Haman, Frank Durbian, Shelly Wepler, Jeff Woodward, Joe Goodwill, Mark Lee, John Fahlman, David Pattyson

**Regrets:** Russell Boals, Nicole Armstrong, COL. Samuel Calkins, David Glatt, Debbie McMechan, David O'Connell, Gregg Wiche

### **Participants and Technical Support:**

Mark Gabriel, Wayne Jenkinson, Bob White, Bruce Davison, Darin Schepp, Scott Jutila, Liz Nelson, Steve Robinson, Girma Sahlu.

### **Agenda:**

1. **Spring 2017 Runoff/Flooding Conditions in the Souris River Basin**
2. **Other Business**

Garland Erbele welcomed the attendees and called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. CST. The main topic of the meeting was the spring 2017 runoff /flooding conditions in the Souris River Basin. This is the second conference call. The following is a summary of the presentations from the jurisdictions that attended the conference call.

### **1. Spring 2017 Runoff/Flooding Conditions in the Souris River Basin**

#### Saskatchewan

John Fahlman stated as in the past WSA had discussions with the operators downstream. Things are beginning to tail-off in Saskatchewan. Most of the snowpack has melted. Boundary is essentially full (10 cm or 4 inches) below FSL. Water is being diverted from Boundary into Rafferty at 4 m<sup>3</sup>/s. As a result, there is some variation in the reservoir elevations. Rafferty is currently an elevation of 550.36 m (6 inches or 15 cm below FSL) and will fill either this week or early next week. After that, WSA will pass the inflows downstream. Alameda is at an elevation of 551.9 m which is 0.7 m (2 ft) below FSL. Inflows into the reservoir are dropping off. It is expected that the wetlands upstream will be releasing water slowly into the reservoir. In general, the flow above the reservoirs is in recession and can be passed downstream without causing problem. WSA will work with US ACE and US FWS to minimize downstream impacts.

Jeff Woodward asked about the snowpack below Rafferty and above the border. J Fahlman answered there is still snow that is left over and melting. Will get an update from the FFLC conference call on Friday. L. Nelson added there was less flow than expected from that area due to the slow and gradual warm up causing no additional peak during the melt.

#### North Dakota

Liz Nelson, US ACE, provide an update on Lake Darling. Currently, Lake Darling is 1.3 ft or 40 cm below its FSL The plan is to hold it a foot lower than normal as per the request by Frank Durbian, US FWS. Inflow of 1,700 cfs into the lake is receding slowly. The discharge is 1200 cfs, which will be reduced to 800 cfs today. The outflow will be further reduced in the next week or two as inflows receded to reach the target elevation. Shelly Wepler mentioned the snow around her area is almost gone. The Souris River at Burlington is still high, current flow is at 1800 cfs. F. Durbian reported the water elevations in the eastern arm of the Souris are on the rise as the snow melts. The river is open at the lower end and there is lots of lowland flooding with roads and culverts being washed out.

#### Manitoba

Mark Lee and Joe Goodwill provided an update about the flooding situation in Manitoba. M. Lee confirmed there was some overland flooding in Manitoba. Road washouts and ice jamming were reported by Parks Manitoba. The rural municipality of Two Borders was impacted by overland flooding and has declared a state of emergency on March 31<sup>st</sup>. Joe Goodwill added half of the municipalities in the southwest have declared state of emergency due to overland flooding. M. Lee noted the Water Survey of Canada (WSC) gauging station at Wawanesa records indicate a flow of 500 m<sup>3</sup>/s (17,600 cfs) which is a decent flow (1:20 - 1:50 year flood event). Joe Goodwill added the river broke out yesterday and came to within 3-4 feet of the 2011 levels. Plum Creek is just starting to move. Assiniboine (west of Brandon) is looking for sand bags for tomorrow. M. Lee mentioned there is a flood warning for Pipestone Creek area, issued today. Garland Erbele noted similar flood issues in North Dakota.

Status of gaging stations – M. Lee reported Wawanesa has not crested yet. Not sure about the local tributaries. Madora Creek has some ice jam problems. Gainsborough Creek crested yesterday. Pipestone Creek is still rising – hence the flood warning today. Jeff Woodward asked about the weather conditions in Manitoba. M. Lee and J. Goodwill replied day time temperature of around 10<sup>0</sup>C and night time temperature of -3<sup>0</sup>C. Shelly Wepler asked who was responsible to provide the statistical report about conditions on the US side. G. Erbele and S. Robinson briefed S. Wepler. US gages upstream of Ramsey County are in recession or steady. Downstream gages have peaked. Westhope and Bantry are still rising. The river channel is open and free of ice. All gages are fully functional. Lorinda Haman in Towner reported the river has dropped 2-3 feet around the Velva area. If the flows are receding as reported, L. Haman noted conditions should be good by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **2. Other Business**

None were identified.

Next conference call on April 19, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. CST/3:00 p.m. CDT  
The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. CST on April 5, 2017