

INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION

July 25, 2023 Executive Meeting

The International Joint Commission (IJC) met in Executive Session (virtually) on Tuesday July 25th, 2023 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM EDT, with Pierre Béland in the Chair.

COMMISSIONERS

Robert Sisson, Chair, US Section
Lance Yohe, US Section
Pierre Béland, Chair, Canadian Section
Merrell-Ann Phare, Canadian Section
Henry Lickers, Canadian Section

SECTION OFFICES

Susan Daniel, Secretary, U.S. Section
Christopher Wilkie, Secretary, Canadian Section
Mark Colosimo, Director Science and Engineering, U.S. Section
John Allis, Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section
Geneviève Asselin, Public Affairs Advisor, Canadian Section
Jennifer Brebner, Web Administrator
Kevin Bunch, Writer-Communications Specialist, U.S. Section (contractor)
Tia Dumoulin, Communications Advisor, Canadian Section
Oliver Dumville, Senior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section
Antionette Dunston, Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Alexandria Farrell, Environmental Officer, Canadian Section
David Fay, Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Kathey-Lee Galvin, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
Adam Greeley, Science Advisor, U.S. Section
Shenice Gross, Network Administrator, U.S. Section (contractor)
Jeff Kart, Executive Editor, IJC Newsletters, U.S. Section (contractor)
Erika Klyszejko, Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Jeff Laberge, Information Management Analyst, Canadian Section
Michael Laitta, Senior Physical Science Adviser/GIS Coordinator, U.S. Section
Catherine Lee-Johnston, Environmental Officer, Canadian Section
Sarah Lobrichon, Public Affairs Manager, Canadian Section
Brian Maloney, Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Reginald McClendon, Executive Administrative Assistant, U.S. Section (contractor)
Semra Mesulam, Legal Advisor, U.S. Section
Diana Moczula, Junior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section

Isabelle Reid Executive Assistant, Canadian Section
Mounir Salmi, Accounting Assistant, U.S. Section (contractor)
Anvi Solanki, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Section
Carole Smith, Senior Advisor, Canadian Section
Derek Spelay, Administrative Assistant, Canadian Section

Jeremy Trombley, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Section
John Yee, Chief, IM and IT Services, Canadian Section
Shane Zurbrigg, Legal Advisor, Canadian Section

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF

Heather Stirratt, Director
Antonette Arvai, Physical Scientist
Raj Bejankiwar, Physical Scientist
Matthew Child, Physical Scientist
Rajendra Poudel, Economist
Laura Sabra, Administrative Officer
Diane Varosky, Administrative Coordinator
Allison Voglesong Zejnati, Public Affairs Specialist
John Wilson, Physical Scientist
Rachel Wyatt, Communications Officer

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioners approved the agenda for the meeting. Commissioners agreed to move International Souris River Board and Poplar River – Big Muddy Basins agenda items to the end of the agenda. Ultimately the discussion on those agenda items was deferred to take place on Friday July 28, 2023 during the Commissioner's next in-camera meeting.

2. ACCREDITED OFFICERS OF THE ST. MARY AND MILK RIVERS

Commissioners received an update regarding current conditions on the St. Mary and Milk Rivers and an Accredited Officer decision to allow Canada to accrue a deficit on the Milk River between June 16 and August 5, 2023, with the understanding that the deficit be repaid later this year. Commissioners were supportive of this decision and appreciative of the efforts of the Accredited Officers and of the International St. Mary and Milk Rivers Study Board to work collaboratively to address current conditions in the basin. Commissioners approved sending a letter to the Accredited Officers and to consider a public acknowledgement of the decision later in the year.

3. INDIGENOUS COLLABORATION TEAM ACTIVITIES

Staff updated Commissioners on the activities of the Indigenous Collaboration Team, specifically regarding the planned establishment of an Indigenous Circle of Experts and efforts to enhance Indigenous collaboration on IWI projects. Commissioners were supportive of the activities outlined and asked for some further information and clarity on several points, including the budgetary aspects of the establishment and work of the Indigenous Circle of Experts, before any final decisions are made.

4. COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Commissioners were updated on the current activities of the Communications team, including an overview of an upcoming Website Needs Assessment, which is the initial phase of the full redevelopment of the website, about the plans for the semi-annual communications workshop and an update on communications activities planned for the 25th anniversary of the International Watersheds Initiative.

5. INTERNATIONAL RED RIVER BOARD UPDATE

Staff updated Commissioners on the status of the International Red River Watershed Board's strategic planning efforts and its annual work plan, noting that the work plan delivery to the Commission is likely December 2023 according to the board's co-chairs. Commissioners reiterated their desire to see the completion of the Board's work plan, and noted their support for facilitation of the Board's meeting in August in order to foster more effective Board discussion and planning.

6. INTERNATIONAL RAINY-LAKE OF THE WOODS WATERSHED BOARD AND WATER LEVELS COMMITTEE

Commissioners received an update on, and discussed, the potential expansion of the Water Levels Committee to include indigenous members. Commissioners discussed the potential implications of expansion at length and are waiting for a further letter from the Water Levels Committee on this subject prior to making any decisions. Commissioners also received an update from staff on adaptive management projects under consideration by the board for which staff is collaborating, as well as an update on the board's progress to consider making a recommendation to the Commission relative to changing the nomenclature of the High Flood Risk Rule Curve for Rainy Lake in the Commission's supplementary order on Rainy Lake.

7. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE

Staff provided an update on the IWI 25th Anniversary Report, and the planning of IWB scoping activities in the Kootenay and Osoyoos basins. Staff noted that the International Kootenay Lake Board of Control has indicated that it believes that IWI scoping should be timed with the review of the 1938 Order, which is currently being planned. The International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control is supportive of IWB scoping activities in the nearer term, and is working with staff to help plan meetings to be held in late summer or early fall.

9. GREAT LAKES - ST. LAWRENCE RIVER ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Commissioners approved the the GLAM Committee's work plan and agreed that it can be posted. Commissioners also discussed how the GLAM Committee can meet other reporting requirements in its directive.

10. TAP REPORT COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioners received an update on the development and planned release of the Commission's 2023 Triennial Assessment of Progress Report and supported staff's plan to aim for an early November release of the report.

11. FLOOD AND DROUGHT UPDATE

Staff updated Commissioners on current hydrological and climatic conditions in basins along the US-Canada boundary, with particular attention on continued dry conditions in the western half of the continent and recent flooding in the Lake Champlain-Richelieu River basin.

17. OTHER BUSINESS

International Lake Superior Board of Control (ILSBC)

On May 3, 2023 commissioners approved the Board’s request to deviate from Plan 2012 flows from May 2023 through November 2023 and IJC’s letter to the ILSBC approving deviation request.

US-Canada Global Center in Environmental Prediction

On May 10, 2023 commissioners approved a draft letter noting IJC support in principle for a US-Canada proposal in partnership for a global centre in environmental prediction

Science Advisory Board – Science Priority Committee (SAB-SPC)

On May 10, 2023, commissioners approved the following retroactive SAB-RCC appointments:

- A. Dr. Ram Yerubandi as a Canadian member for a three-year period, starting April 1, 2023 and ending March 31, 2026.

- B. Dr. Dale Hoff as a U.S. member for a three-year period, starting May 1, 2023 and ending April 30, 2026.

- C. Dr. Michael Twiss as a binational member for a two-year period, starting March 1, 2023 and ending Feb 28, 2025.

On July 6, 2023, 2023, commissioners approved Nutrients in Lake Erie and Lake Ontario: Synthesis of International Joint Commission Recommendations and Assessment of Domestic Action Plans Report and the associated contractor report for the purposes of transmitting to the Parties and posting to the IJC website; and the associated outreach and engagement plan.

Great Lakes Water Quality Board (GLWQB)

On May 11, 20223 commissioners approved the appointment of Col. Jason Buursma as the Alternate U.S. Co-Chair of the International Niagara Board of Control, the International Lake Superior Board of Control, and the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board for a two-year period, from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2025, or until a new Alternate U.S. Co-Chair is appointed, whichever comes first.

International Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Board and International Niagara Board of Control

On May 12, 2023 Commissioners approved the appointment of Col. Jason Buursma as the Alternate U.S. Co-Chair of the International Niagara Board of Control, the International Lake Superior Board of Control, and the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board for a two-year period, from May 1, 2023, to April 30, 2025, or until a new Alternate U.S. Co-Chair is appointed, whichever comes first.

On June 16, 2023 commissioners approved the re-appointment of Ms. Patricia Clavet as member of the International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSRLB) for a period of three years, beginning on June 1, 2023 and ending May 31, 2026.

International Red River Watershed Board (IRRWB)

On May 23, 2023 commissioners approved the following reappointments to the IRRWB:

1. Reappoint Canadian Co-Chair Patrick Cherneski for a 3-year period starting June 1, 2023 and ending May 31, 2026.
2. Reappoint Canadian member Dr. Annette Trimbee for a 3-year period starting March 19, 2023, and ending March 18, 2026.
3. Reappoint Canadian member Melissa Hotain for a 3-year period starting March 19, 2023, and ending March 18, 2026.
4. Reappoint retroactively Canadian member Jason Vanrobaeys for a 3-year period starting August 19, 2022 and ending August 18, 2025.
5. Reappoint retroactively US member Nathan Kestner for a 2-year period starting December 12, 2022 and ending December 11, 2024.
6. Reappoint U.S. member Greg Wiche for a 2-year period starting May 1, 2023 and ending April 30, 2025.
7. Reappoint U.S. member April Poitra-Walker for a three-year period starting March 19, 2023 and ending March 18, 2026.

Canadian Water Resource Agency

On June 1, 2023 commissioners approved sponsoring the CWRA Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia later in June.

Milltown Dam Decommissioning

On June 5, 2023 commissioners approved the following:

1. The Order regarding the decommissioning of Milltown Dam and the eventual termination of the IJC's October 2, 1934 Order.
2. A letter to New Brunswick Power conveying the Commission's Order.
3. A letter to the International St. Croix River Watershed Board thanking them for their recent letter and asking them to remain aware of the ongoing progress and impacts of decommissioning.

International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board

On June 16, 2023 commissioners approved the re-appointment of Ms. Patricia Clavet as member of the International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSRLB) for a period of three years, beginning on June 1, 2023 and ending May 31, 2026.

On July 1, 2023 commissioners approved the reappointment of Tom Brown for one-year from May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024.

Great Lakes Adaptive Management Committee

GLAM Phase 2 PAG

On June 29, 2023 commissioners approved the appointment of Shannon Hurlbut, an engineer with New York Power Authority, as a United States member for the Phase 2 PAG.

GLAM Work Plan and Reporting

On July 1, 2023 commissioners approved a GLAM workplan as well as changes to the GLAM reporting schedule in view of their continuing expedited review of Plan 2014.

International Rainy Lake of the Woods (IRLWWB)

On July 20, 2023 commissioners approved the appointment of Matt Myers as a Canadian board member and co-chair of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) re: the International Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed Board.

On July 25, 2023 commissioners approved the individuals for reappointment to the IRLWWB's Adaptive Management Committee (AMC), each for a three-year term effective from June 21, 2023, through June 20, 2026: Mr. Lucas King, Ms. Melissa Mosley and Mr. Joshua Jones. They also approved the appointment of Mr. Jeff Polakoff to the IRLWWB's AMC for a three-year term, effective from July 17, 2023, through July 16, 2026.

International Souris River Board (ISRB)

On July 4, 2023 commissioners approved the following the appointments of Mr. Mark Lee as Canadian co-chair of the ISRB’s Adaptive Management Committee (AMC), and the appointment of Mr. Tim Ma as Canadian co-chair of the ISRB’s Natural Flow and Apportionment Subcommittee (NFAS).

Original signed by:

Christopher Wilkie
Secretary
Canadian Section

Susan Daniel
Secretary
United States Section

