Elk-Kootenai/y Reference
Meeting Summary: Ad Hoc Meeting of the Governance Body

Meeting Location: Virtual
February 23, 2026

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

On February 23, 2026, the Elk-Kootenai/y Watershed Governance Body held a virtual ad hoc meeting. This was an in-camera meeting of Governance Body members without the IJC present as Secretariat and was a follow up discussion to the January 21, 2026 Governance Body meeting and the ad hoc February 12, 2026 Governance Body meeting. As per the Terms of Reference, the Governance Body discussed an extension of the IJC's role as Secretariat beyond March 2026, as currently laid out in the Terms of Reference.

MEETING ATTENDANCE: ʔakisq̓nuk, ʔaq̓am, British Columbia, Canada, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Idaho, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Montana, United States, yaqan nuʔkiy

MEETING SUMMARY:

1. **Introductions**
   The ad hoc meeting of the Governance Body opened.

2. **Roundtable Discussion Regarding IJC Secretariat Extension Period**
   The Governance Body's Terms of Reference state that: "The IJC will serve as the Governance Body Secretariat until March 2026. After that date, the IJC may continue in that role, subject to consensus of the members and issuance of any necessary authority to the IJC, consistent with Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty."

   At meeting 7 of the Governance Body, the Governance Body decided to extend the IJC's role as Secretariat but did not decide on specific language which is needed to formally enact the extension. On February 12 and 23 the Governance Body continued that discussion.

The Governance Body agreed that the IJC will continue to serve as Secretariat for the Governance Body until June 30, 2027, or six months after the Elk-Kootenai/y Watershed Study Board's Final Report is delivered to the Governance Body, whichever is later.

At least three months before that date, the Governance Body will discuss the IJC's continued role as Secretariat. The IJC may continue to serve as Secretariat after June 30, 2027, or six months after the Elk-Kootenai/y Watershed Study Board's Final Report is delivered to the Governance Body, whichever is later, subject to consensus of the Governance Body members and issuance of any necessary authority to the IJC, consistent with Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty.

3. **Next Steps**

Global Affairs Canada and the U.S. State Department will send a letter to the IJC consistent with this decision in order to fulfill the requirements of Article IX of the Boundary Waters Treaty. As with the Reference of March 8, 2024, the Ktunaxa governments will also prepare a statement confirming that this request was developed in partnership with Ktunaxa, Canada and the U.S., and the Ktunaxa governments concur with this request. Global Affairs Canada and the U.S. State Department will send the letters with the accompanying Ktunaxa statement, to the IJC before March 8, 2026.