

ST. CLAIR RIVER BINATIONAL PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
(BPAC)

Minutes - FINAL
Meeting 2018-3

Thursday, July 26, 2018
Home of Canadian Chairperson – Kris Lee
2999 St. Clair Parkway
Sombra, Ontario

ATTENDEES:

Kelly Johnson
Patty Troy
Fred Kemp
Lori Eschenburg
Terry Burrell

Kathy Watts
Kris Lee
Naomi Williams
Donna Blue
Darrell Randell

Peter Westfall
Kirsten Lyons
April White
Melanie Foose

GUESTS:

Allison Voglesong Zejnati

Mariah Alexander

REGRETS:

Paulette Duhaime
Frank Frisk

Ted Briggs

Judy Ogden

Call to Order and Introductions – K. Lee

The meeting was called to order by Kris Lee.

Adoption, Additions or Corrections of Draft Agenda – All

The draft agenda was reviewed and additions or corrections were solicited from BPAC members.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Kathy Watts that the draft agenda be accepted as prepared.

CARRIED

Approval of April 19, 2018 Draft Minutes and Actions – All

Actions arising from the last meeting on April 19, 2018 were reviewed along with the draft minutes.

- No correction to be made to draft minutes.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Patty Troy that the draft minutes of April 19, 2018 be accepted as prepared.

CARRIED

2018 Science Symposium – A. White

The 3rd Annual Science Symposium, hosted by the Walpole Island Heritage Centre and the Aamjiwnaang Environment Committee, was held on April 11, 2018 in Wallaceburg, Ontario. Approximately 80 people attended.

The purpose of the Science Symposium was to share results on monitoring and studies that have been conducted on water quality, coastal wetland habitat quality, and the status of fish and wildlife populations. In addition, completed habitat restoration projects that help support the local needs of fish and wildlife were discussed.

ACTION – Kelly Johnson will distribute proceedings from the Symposium to BPAC members.

Canadian AOC Update – A. White

April White provided BPAC with an update on the Canadian BUIs and work being done in the AOC. Four BUIs remain “Impaired” while 2 “Require Further Assessment” and 3 are currently under review to be redesignated to “Not Impaired” status. Those 3 include: Restrictions on Dredging, Bird or Animal Deformities and Reproductive Problems, and Beach Closings. The next BUIs to be assessed for redesignation will be: Restrictions on Drinking Water, Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations, and Fish Tumours.

April also discussed the criteria for BUI #14 – Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat, and accomplishments to date. Significant work has been done in the AOC to meet this criteria, particularly in regard to habitat restoration. Over 170 hectares of costal wetland projects have been implemented.

Science and monitoring in the AOC has been a combined effort between Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC). Scientific research for the BUIs is now complete.

ECCC and MOECC have been in discussion with industry management for approximately 20 months regarding the contaminated sediment remediation project in the St. Clair. The next step of the project will see a detailed engineering design completed which could take up to 2 years. This will help refine sediment management areas and costs associated with the remediation. ECCC recently announced funding of \$250,000 over 3 years towards the engineering design phase. Please direct media inquiries related to the project and associated funding to Kelly Johnson for the time being.

US Drinking Water BUI Update – P. Troy

The US Drinking Water BUI criteria was finalized in May 2018. The criteria were sent out to the BPAC for comments, and consensus was received. The criteria have now been sent to the state for approval. The committee is proceeding under the assumption the criteria will be accepted.

The Drinking Water Subcommittee will be meeting again on August 9, 2018. During this meeting they will begin drafting the BUI removal document. This will be a collaborative process, with the subcommittee meeting regularly to draft the document.

University of Michigan Master’s Thesis – A. Voglesong Zejnati

Allison Voglesong Zejnati is a graduate student researcher at the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability. Allison explained to the BPAC that her Masters’ thesis research seeks to understand what distinguishes Area of Concern programs that differ in their progress. The St. Clair River is one of five AOC case studies for this thesis research. Allison will be interviewing members of the BPAC to capture what individuals believe are the factors that influence the group’s ability to make progress toward completing the management actions in the AOC.

Update on industry discussions re. Chemical Valley – K. Lee

On behalf of the Wallaceburg Advisory Team for a Cleaner Habitat (WATCH), Kris Lee updated the BPAC about the work they are doing related to the BUI - Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste and Odour Problems.

The Drinking Water Discussion Paper was published by the CRIC in 2017 followed by consultation with Samia, Walpole and Wallaceburg communities. WATCH submitted a response which included the following:

1. WATCH accepts the discussion paper and asks the MOECC to move forward on the BUI as the MOECC has no legal authority or enforcement capability on "community right to know" with respect to information on industry site specific spill prevention.
2. The final proposal should include an overview of action items of the 35 IPAT recommendations.
3. WATCH requests that the WATCH/industry interview meeting notes be included in the final proposal. These notes are posted on line at www.biowatch.ca but should be included in the final proposal as a benchmark.
4. On "life after delisting" WATCH will continue to work independently to request that:
 - a) the Wallaceburg Water Filtration Plant has direct access to the SLEA monitoring equipment on line data;
 - b) each industry develops a proactive communication plan with downstream communities regarding spill prevention technology and other information on a prescribed frequency to instill confidence where drinking water quality has potential to impact downstream communities.

Detroit River Evening Overview – K. Johnson

In June Kelly Johnson attended the 8th Annual Detroit River Evening in Windsor, Ontario. This event is organized and hosted by the Detroit River Canadian Clean-Up. The evening included three presentations:

1. The Wildlife Toxicology Research Section at ECCC discussed research related to the Bird or Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problem BUI;
2. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada provided updates on recent fish habitat monitoring conducted in the Detroit River;
3. The Windsor-Detroit Bridge Authority provided an update on the imminent Gordie Howe Bridge project.

Kelly will be exploring the idea of holding a similar event in the St. Clair River AOC in early fall 2018.

Updates from OMOECC, ECCC, Michigan OGL and USEPA – T. Briggs, A. White, M. Foose and R. Ellison

OMOECC Update:

Ted Briggs was unable to attend the meeting. April White provided a brief update on Ted's behalf.

Ontario has recently elected a new provincial government. As a result, distribution of funding is currently suspended.

ECCC Update:

April White informed the BPAC that Great Lakes Protection Initiative funding was recently announced. Three projects in the AOC, led by St. Clair Region Conservation Authority, Rural Lambton Stewardship Network, and Walpole Island First Nation, received funding. Agreements are currently being developed for these projects.

Michigan OGL Update:

Melanie Foose reported that the Lake St. Clair Conference is being held on November 1 and 2, 2018 in Michigan. During this conference issues related to the river will be discussed.

USEPA Update:

Rose Ellison was unable to attend the meeting. No update was available.

Committee Reports:

Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) – P. Troy and P. Duhaime

The SPAC met June 27 - 28 in Frankenmuth, MI. Discussion included the Roles and Responsibilities document drafted by the Office of the Great Lakes (OGL). This document was forwarded to BPAC for comment; the only comments received were from Paulette and Patty, and were forwarded to Rick Hobria. SPAC bylaw revisions were also reviewed. OGL reported on its participation with the federal / state AOC coordination committee, and the Michigan PFAs Action Response Team. Updates were provided on University of Michigan projects funded by OGL. EPA reported on the Great Lakes National Program Office staff changes and on the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan III public engagement process.

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) – Canada – D. Randell and T. Burrell

The next Friends meeting is being planned for early September. Darrell Randell has two habitat restoration projects he will be seeking support for.

Work is underway on re-developing the Friends website, which also hosts information for the AOC.

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) – USA – S. Faust and K. Lyons

The Friends Board of Directors are continuing their strategic planning process.

The Sturgeon Festival was held on June 2, 2018 in Port Huron, Michigan. There were approximately 5000 attendees on the day of the festival and 650 children in the two days before the weekend event.

Friends are hosting a 7 week Michigan Conservation Stewards program. The classes will include field days as well as community service work.

BPAC Membership Subcommittee – A. Kerr and F. Kemp

BPAC Chairs sent a letter to all members expressing concern for falling attendance at BPAC meetings, and the continued importance of the role of the BPAC. Fred Kemp advised that non-

active members will be contacted again to determine their continued interest in membership. Patty Troy and Kris Lee offered to assist with phone calls.

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – TBD

No new updates available.

Four Agency Managers Work Group – M. Foose

The next Four Agency Managers Work Group meeting will be held on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River in the AOC on October 31, 2018.

Other Business:

St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission

Lori Eschenburg provided the following update to the BPAC:

- On July 10-12, the Blueways of St. Clair participated in a project with the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) to document 116 miles of mapped water trails in St. Clair County. Terrain 360 is the company that documented 450 miles of water trails and over 200 miles of land trails in seven counties in Southeast Michigan in July 2018. The process is like Google Street View, but for trails. The footage is captured on a boat or bike, and consists of an 8-foot tall camera configuration of 6 high resolution cameras that take a picture every 50 feet. The footage will be processed and offered up to the general public later in the year. The footage can be used on any website and will also be available on the Southeast Michigan Park Finder website and app.
- The Blueways of St. Clair will be completing a Strategic Plan over the next year and participating in training paddlers to spot invasive species along our waterways. If invasive species are spotted, they will be reported by using the MISIN app, a Michigan State university app for reporting invasive species.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at the St. Clair County Building (Auditorium), Port Huron, Michigan.

Adjournment

Moved by Kathy Watts and seconded by Kris Lee that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED