



Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

Approved Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2021- Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Minutes Prepared by Natasha Pozega

Attending Members:

Paulette Duhaime	U.S. Co-Chair, Citizen at Large	Natasha Pozega	St. Clair River RAP Coordinator
John Timar	City of Sarnia	Sheri Faust	Friends of the St. Clair River (U.S)
Patty Troy	US Co-Vice Chair, Env. Sector	Melanie Foose	Michigan EGLE
Donna Blue	St. Clair Region Conservation Authority	Kirsten Lyons	Friends of the St. Clair River (U.S)
Terry Burrell	Sarnia City Council	Sharilyn Johnston	Aamjiwnaang First Nation
Kris Lee	CAN Co-Chair, Wallaceburg Advisory Team for Cleaner Habitat	April White	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Peter Westfall	CAN Business and Industry	Ted Briggs	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
John Jackson	CAN Env. Sector	Naomi Williams	Walpole Island First Nation
Fred Kemp	City of Port Huron	Dan Collins	Citizen at Large
Theresa Warren	Lambton Public Health		

Guests:

Christy Ellery	Student	Dennis Plain	Aamjiwnaang First Nation Environment Committee
Janelle Nahmabin	Aamjiwnaang First Nation Environment Committee	Mark Burrows	International Joint Commission

Regrets:

Frank Frisk	US Shipping Sector	Sean Morrison	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks- Sarnia
Dallas Sinopole	Aamjiwnaang First Nation	Judy Lindberg	Citizen

Actions Arising from the Minutes

Members asked to review the St. Clair River BPAC Implementation Plan drafted by the University of Michigan School of Environment and Sustainability for discussion at the next meeting.

1.0 Call to Order and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm.

Housekeeping:

- Members asked to add name and affiliation in chat box to mark attendance.
- Notice to committee that the meeting would be recorded to assist with minutes production.
- Chair will ask for opposition to motions only.

2.0 Adoption, Additions or Corrections to Draft Agenda

- Corrections: Paulette Duhaime will speak to item 5.0- Drinking Water Survey Results Summary (U.S.) and item 7.0- Life After Delisting Summary instead of Sheri Faust.

MOTION to approve the Agenda as revised.

Moved by John Jackson and seconded by John Timar.

CARRIED

3.0 Approval of February 16, 2021 Draft Minutes

MOTION to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the BPAC on February 16, 2021 as amended.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Fred Kemp.

CARRIED

4.0 RAP Coordination Update- Natasha Pozega

Natasha provided an update on some of the recent and ongoing actions occurring in the Canadian portion of the St. Clair River Area of Concern:

- **April 21, 2021- A virtual presentation held on Drinking Water.** This was the first of a 3-part virtual series in lieu of an AOC symposium. The event included a prayer and opening ceremony by Lynn Rosales from Aamjiwnaang First Nation, an *AOC 101* presentation by April White, ECCC, an *Introduction to the Drinking Water BUI* by Natasha Pozega, RAP Coordinator, and a *Panelist Q&A* with Vince Gagner (BASES), Kris Lee (WATCH) and Darren Galbraith (Wallaceburg Water

Treatment Plant). Special guests included Scott Colwell (Walpole Island Water Treatment Plant) and Steve Clarke (Thames-Sydenham Source Water Protection Coordinator). A recording and the responses to community questions will be posted on friendsofstclair.ca.

- **St. Clair River Fish Consumption Survey**- launched at the beginning of March, but only started promotion at the end of April. The survey is open to anyone who fishes the St. Clair River and is being launched to collect data for BUI 1 as per our 2017-2022 AOC Work Plan. To date, 60 responses have been received. The survey will run into the fall and will close with a draw for 3 \$100 Gift Cards to the Outdoorsman hunting and fishing store in Sarnia, ON.
- **Monthly “River News” E-Newsletter**- The Friends of St. Clair River Newsletter has gone digital and is now delivered monthly using MailChimp. The first newsletter was released in February 2021. The mailing list has grown from roughly 45 to 75 subscribers in the last three months. Campaign opening rates are between 70-80%. Past newsletters are available on friendsofstclair.ca/about-us/newsletters.
- **St. Clair River AOC Story Map**- an interactive, web-based tool promoting some of the great work that has been completed in the Canadian portion of the St. Clair River AOC. This is a project commissioned by the Canadian RAP Implementation Committee and will be hosted on friendsofstclair.ca. The Story Map does not include ALL projects that have been completed to date, but highlights many of the key projects for each BUI. It is a work-in-progress and Natasha will continue to update and add more projects as time permits. An effort has been made to recognize the many partners that have been involved in the implementation of the RAP. As a project of the CRIC, the Story Map focuses on the progress made in the Canadian portion of the AOC, but it could be expanded to include U.S. projects with time and resources.
 - **Link to Story Map:** <https://arcg.is/18DDKG>
- **Binational Habitat Poster**- Natasha and Sheri have been working collaboratively to produce a binational poster highlighting some of the habitat projects that have been done on both sides of the St. Clair River. This is something that has been inspired by work done in other AOCs. The content has been drafted and is now in the hands of a graphic designer.

5.0 Drinking Water Survey Results Summary (U.S.)- Paulette Duhaime

In support of the Drinking Water BUI, a community survey was launched in the month of March. There were 2500 responses in total, but only 419 local responses. The survey collected information about community drinking water perception as well as demographics. Paulette summarized some of the preliminary findings and presented them to the group. The final report will be provided to the group once available.

6.0 Drinking Water BUI Status Updates (Binational)- Melanie Foose (U.S.), Natasha Pozega (CAN)

Canada- An initial draft assessment report for the *Drinking Water and Taste and Odour Problems BUI* has been written, but there is still some data missing (request has been submitted). The initial draft will be presented on June 8th to the Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) to identify if any additional information is desired by the committee.

U.S.- Melanie has been working on the draft *Drinking Water and Taste and Odour Problems BUI* report for the past two years. Part of the delisting criteria includes an exercise in establishing why the drinking water supply is safe to drink. Under the Oil Pollution Act, large facilities are required to have a Facility Response Plan (FRP). Only one facility (two locations) is required to have this plan, which is currently under a scheduled 5-year review. Upon approval of this plan by the EPA, the draft report will be completed and enter the redesignation process.

7.0 Life After Delisting- Paulette Duhaime

The University of Michigan School of Environment and Sustainability has completed their project to help 10 PACs in Michigan to develop a plan for moving forward, including life after delisting. Objectives were to determine which of the recommendations by previous students were being used, to collaborate with PACs to create individual implementation plans and document strategies moving forward, and to recommend to EGLE and the PACs how to strengthen PAC organization structure, capacity, and durability. The St. Clair River Plan was received and has been circulated to the group. Members are asked to review this document in advance of the next meeting for further discussion.

8.0 Agency Updates

i. Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks- Ted Briggs

- Two new funding agreements for this year: FOSCR to continue to support outreach and education on the St. Clair River AOC (March), St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for further shoreline rehabilitation work.
- Continued funding to support RAP coordination until March 2022.
- New Canada-Ontario Agreement expected in early June (previous agreement expired December 2019).

ii. Environment and Climate Change Canada- April White

- Funding for RAP coordination has moved from a grant and contribution agreement to a contractual agreement. Last contract finished at the end of March, next agreement will hopefully support funding for the next three years.
- Continued funding provided for First Nations engagement along the St. Clair River. Funding committed for this year and next to Walpole Island First Nation and Aamjiwnaang First Nation.
- Much of the fish and wildlife project field work has been completed. Sediment field work is nearing completion (if not already completed).
- AOC video- some comments were received from the CRIC and BPAC. A request for final edits has been submitted to the videographer.
- A letter has been submitted to the COA Annex Leads to request the redesignation of the *Fish Tumours and Other Deformities BUI* from "Requires Further Assessment" to "Not Impaired". Currently awaiting a response.

iii. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy- Melanie Foose

- Field work has been completed to support the Fish and Wildlife Consumption BUI, but results are not expected for at least another year due to back-log at the lab conducting the analysis.
- Areas of Concern Conference- still planned as an in-person conference September 29-30th, 2021 in Muskegon, Michigan. Link to conference website:

https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308_3333-547532--00.html#:~:text=This%20year's%20conference%20will%20be,meeting%20in%20person%20this%20summer

- Virtual Environmental Justice Conference May 18-20, 2021. This is a free event. Link to website: https://www.michigan.gov/egle/0,9429,7-135-3308_3333-551173--00.html

iv. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- No update

9.0 Committee Reports

i. Statewide Public Advisory Council- Patty Troy, Paulette Duhaime

- Last Meeting: March 4, 2021
- Melanie now has an increased role with the SPAC.
- EGLE is working on the third year of their 3-year grant working with EPA.
- There will be a gap between the PAC support grant cycles.
- SPAC set up an on environmental justice sub-committee for the AOC program. The first meeting has been held and discussed PAC standards for community representation and inclusion, PAC accountability, enlisting PACs earlier in decision-making process, and PAC funding. Recommendations will be made to SPAC to consider hiring a consultant and to allocate funding.
- Link to Env. Justice Public Advocate Office: [Michigan.gov/environmentaljustice](https://www.michigan.gov/environmentaljustice)
- Next Meeting: June 17, 2021- virtual meeting open to all.

ii. Friends of the St. Clair River (Canada)- Terry Burrell

- Recent Meetings: March 10, 2021 and a brainstorming session on April 7, 2021.
- Funding agreement has been reached with MECP.
- On Earth Day, presentation was made to the Sarnia-Lambton Friendship Centre.
- The group is brainstorming projects and where they would like to focus time and resources for the next year.
- Next Meeting: Brainstorming session on May 11, 2021

iii. Friends of the St. Clair River (USA)- Sheri Faust

- Bluewater Sturgeon Festival- June 4th on the Huron Lady- Port Huron sight-seeing boat. Two cruises at 1pm and 3pm. Tickets are \$30 each. This includes a 90-minute cruise narrated by fisheries biologists, an onboard sturgeon aquarium, and live sturgeon research activities. Later in June, there will be a virtual experience available by donation. Visit sturgeonfestival.com for more information.
- A second sturgeon festival event is scheduled for August 22nd. This will be a lighthouse hike during the August full moon, also known as the Sturgeon moon.
- Staff is performing training on butterfly monitoring.
- Lots of invasive species management work, wildflower walks, and water quality and stream monitoring programs underway. Staff are offering macroinvertebrate ID programs and educating the community about macroinvertebrates as water quality indicators.
- Received a contract for 5 new stream sites to perform water quality monitoring.
- New crowd-sourced, photo monitoring program launched at the Blue Water River Walk. Citizens take a photo at the station, submit it to Chronolog, and it will create a time-lapse of that section. Stations will be installed for 2 or more years. More information can be found at scriver.org.

- 2019 Annual Report Brochures were mailed to partners. Document is also available online.
- iv. **Canadian RAP Implementation Committee- Kris Lee**
 - Last Meeting: October 24, 2020.
 - Next Meeting: June 8, 2021 at 1:00pm.
- v. **Four Agency Managers Work Group- Ted Briggs**
 - Last meeting: January, 2021
 - Next Meeting: Date TBD- next meeting hosted my Michigan EGLE.

12.0 Other Business

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority has launched a Virtual Field Trip on the Lake Huron-Erie Corridor. This is a free educational resource for anyone who is interested: <https://bit.ly/GLHuron-ErieCorridor>.

Suggestion to strengthen cross-promotion between the Friends of St. Clair River groups.

13.0 Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Will be at the call of the Chair.

MOTION to adjourn.

Moved by Terry Burrell, seconded by Fred Kemp.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm.