



## **St. Clair River Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) Meeting Minutes**

**Tuesday November 8, 2022  
Zoom Teleconference  
Minutes produced by Mike Moroney**

### **Attendees:**

April White, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)  
Cathleen O'Brien, Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN)  
Courtney Jackson, Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN)  
Donna Blue, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA)  
Jason Vaillant, General Manager, Bluewater Association for Safety, Environment and Sustainability (BASES)  
Kris Lee, Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)  
Mike Moroney, RAP Coordinator (SCRCA)  
Naomi Williams, Walpole Island First Nation (Walpole Island First Nation)  
Stephen Marklevitz, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF)  
Ted Briggs, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)  
Tracy Krull, Bluewater Association for Safety, Environment and Sustainability (BASES)  
Terry Burrell, City of Sarnia  
Theresa Warren, Lambton Public Health

### **Regrets:**

Trevor Robak, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)

### **Actions Arising from Meeting**

#### **Outstanding Action Items:**

- a) April White to share an updated draft Assessment Report for BUI 3 – Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations to CRIC members – It has undergone a rewrite and is under review by ECCC. Anticipate being able to speak to the updated report at the next CRIC meeting.

#### **New Action Items:**

- b) Donna Blue to update the posting for the Fish Survey on FOSCR website so that it specifies a closing date of December 31, 2022.
- c) Naomi to submit a request to Chief and Council for time on the agenda on January 24, 2023 for a presentation on BUI 9.

- d) Mike to recommence meetings of the CRIC Outreach Committee, with representation from Walpole Island First Nation, Aamjiwnaang First Nation, MECP and ECCC to explore the concept of an Annual Community Event and to discuss other outreach related issues as they arise.
- e) Mike to amend the draft Workplan to shift the completion of the redesignation process for BUI 9 by one year.
- f) Mike to amend the Public Outreach and Education table of the draft Workplan to identify the newsletters for Walpole Island First Nation and Aamjiwnaang First Nation, remove reference to the Walpole Island First Nation Ecosystem Circles, and reference the use of social media by both communities.
- g) CRIC members to review items tasked to them in the Workplan to make sure it is appropriate to keep that specific item tasked to their organization as the lead.

### Meeting called to order at 1:00 pm

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions:

Ted Briggs chaired the meeting and welcomed CRIC members to the Zoom teleconference.

#### 2. Approval of Agenda

The November 8, 2022 draft agenda was approved.

#### 3. Review and Acceptance of Minutes from June 23, 2022

The minutes from the June 23, 2022 meeting were approved. Previous action items were completed with the exception of the two items identified above.

#### 4. Status of Beneficial Use Impairments – April White, Ted Briggs

**BUI 1- Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption (Impaired):** Ted advised that some fish assessment work has started with Ken Drouillard with the University of Windsor - GLIER and April confirmed that ECCC has provided funding for the work. The work has been temporarily paused at present. The committee will be kept updated on the status of progress. Ted advised that the fish consumption survey is still underway until the end of December 2022. Naomi recommended amending the posting on the fish survey to specify that the deadline for completing the survey is December 31, 2022. **Action:** Donna Blue to update the posting on FOSCR website so that it specifies a closing date of December 31, 2022.

Ted advised that progress on this BUI is also tied to work on the contaminated sediment. Focusing current efforts on the three priority areas north of Stag Island. The Engineering and Design Plan was finalized in December 2021, consisting of an erosion resistant cover. MECP has been in discussions with Dow Canada and ECCC on next steps.

**BUI 6: Degradation of Benthos (Impaired):** As explained in BUI 1, the ability to redesignate this BUI is also linked to work on the contaminated sediment in the three priority areas of the St. Clair River.

**BUI 3- Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations (RFA):** As explained under remaining action items, April advised that the assessment report has undergone a rewrite and is under review by ECCC. April anticipates being able to speak to the updated report at the next CRIC meeting.

**BUI 9- Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption, or Taste and Odour Problems (Impaired):** April explained that the next step is to make a presentation to Walpole Island First Nation Chief and Council on the recommendation to redesignate it to Not Impaired. Naomi advised that the next available date for a presentation is January 24, 2023. It will likely need to be an in-person presentation. **Action:** Naomi to submit a request to Chief and Council for time on the agenda on January 24, 2023 for a presentation on BUI 9.

**BUI 14: Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Habitat (Impaired):** April advised that a strategy has been put in place to create the assessment report and she recently had a discussion with the RAP Coordinator (Mike Moroney) to discuss the approach. It is expected to be a comprehensive report. Aiming for first draft by the end of December 2022 so that it can be shared with CRIC. If additional time is required, it will be circulated in early Spring 2023.

## 5. Reaffirming Outreach Committee Participants

Mike explained that since it has been a while since the Outreach Committee last met, there is a need to confirm who the participants on the committee should be and to recommence the meetings. It was noted that previous meetings consisted of representatives from Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation, ECCC and MECP. Ted agreed that those should be the core participants. **Action:** Mike to schedule an Outreach Committee meeting with representation as discussed above.

With respect to the proposal to hold Annual Community Events, Kris recommended that the committee consider using a forum along the St. Clair River. Possible locations could be at Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation or an alternate location.

## 6. Draft Workplan for 2022-2027

Mike spoke to the second draft of the Workplan for 2022-2027, focusing on the table of action items for each remaining BUI.

The Workplan will reflect the actions that are to be completed to address the five remaining BUIs:

- BUI 1: Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption
- BUI 3: Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations
- BUI 6: Degradation of Benthos
- BUI 9: Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste and Odour Problems
- BUI 14: Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Mike explained that the format will be similar to that which was used for previous workplans. He provided an overview of what is included in the Preface, the updated Acknowledgement section, and the Introduction. Jason Vaillant confirmed that he is the new contact for BASES on the CRIC and the Acknowledgement section should reflect that.

The table that provides an update on the status of each of the BUIs was amended to also include the date on which a BUI was redesignated.

Mike then provided an overview of each of the BUIs and actions to be completed by fiscal year from 2022-2023 to 2026-2027 and reminded the members to carefully review the timelines identified to make sure they are achievable. For example, the sediment management work has some unknowns at this time so may need to be adjusted. Ted suggested allowing for additional time to complete the redesignation process for BUI 9.

**Action:** Mike to shift the completion for the redesignation process by one year.

With respect to the actions listed in the Public Outreach and Education table, Naomi made suggestions for a few revisions. **Action:** Mike to amend the Public Outreach and Education table to reflect that Nin.Da.Waab.Jig is the Walpole Island First Nation newsletter and the Chippewa Tribe-Une is the Aamjiwnaang First Nation newsletter. In addition, the current reference to the Walpole Island First Nation Ecosystem Circles should be removed since they have not met in a while, and the use of social media should be added to both Aamjiwnaang First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation.

**Action:** CRIC members to review items tasked to them to make sure it is appropriate to keep that specific item tasked to their organization as the lead.

Mike explained that Appendix A will include an overview of the BUI Redesignation Process, which will be provided by ECCC, and Appendix B will provide a summary of work completed during the previous 5 years.

**Action:** Mike to recirculate the draft workplan and inform Committee members of the deadline to provide comments.

## **7. Funding Updates – April White, Ted Briggs, Stephen Marklevitz, Trevor Robak**

### **7.1. Environment and Climate Change Canada- April White**

- ECCC is continuing to provide funding for the RAP Program through a contract agreement with the SCRCA. Contract in place until March 2024.
- ECCC also provided funding to Aamjiwnaang First Nation and Walpole Island First Nation for community engagement. In year three of a 3-year agreement. Agreements are in place until the end of March 2023. Submissions will need to be made under the Great Lakes Protection Initiative for funding after March 2023.

## **7.2. Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks- Ted Briggs**

- Have a funding agreement in place for the St. Clair River RAP Coordinator until March 2024.
- Also provided funding to the SCRCA for shoreline rehabilitation work and education and outreach.
- MECP has been working with FOSCR on their funding submission for 2023.

## **7.3. Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry- Stephen Marklevitz**

- No updates at this time in terms of funding. However, MNRF was able to get the Connecting Channels AOC program in place. Still to be decided if it will be the St. Clair River or Detroit River next year. Need to collaborate with Michigan before confirming the location. Regardless, it will be back in the St. Clair River either next year or the following year. The program will also provide the post delisting monitoring of the fish population in the connecting waterways moving forward.

## **7.4. Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs- Trevor Robak**

- No updates. Trevor was unable to participate.

## **8. RAP Coordinator Updates**

### Work Completed:

- MECP Interim Progress Report – Submitted November 1, 2022
- Prepared FOSCR November E-Newsletter to be published on November 8, 2022
- Provided input on draft ECCC Fact Sheet – Water quality monitoring in the St. Clair River.
- Updated FOSCR website

### Work In-Progress:

- Draft 5 Year Workplan
- BUI 14 – Fish and Wildlife Habitat: Providing input to the BUI 14 Assessment Report. Current priority.
- BUI 9 - Restrictions on Drinking Water – Working with Naomi for confirmation on timing to present to the new Chief (Chief Miskokomon) and Council.

### Future Work:

- Prepare Minutes from BPAC Meeting held Nov. 1 – focus was on Spill Notification Procedures
- Provide ½ page advertisement to Bluewater Anglers for 2023 Salmon Derby tabloid, recognizing work done to date, future work and interest in new members. Selecting new Chair and Vice Chair at Annual General Meeting in December 2022.
- 2017-2022 Accomplishments Report – Will need to start work on this in 2023.

## **9. Member Updates:**

### **9.1. Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) – Terry Burrell:**

- FOSCR President Craig Griffiths will be stepping down and a new Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed at the next meeting in December 2022. FOSCR is also looking for

new members. FOSCR is continuing to support BPAC and working on signage. FOSCR is working with MECP on submission of their funding request.

**9.2. Rural Lambton Stewardship Network (RLSN)**

- No updates. Jake was not able to attend.

**9.3. Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) – Kris Lee**

- Recommended that the logo created by Janelle Nahmabin for the BUI Redesignation Event continue to be used in conjunction with the BPAC logo whenever possible. About 60 people attended the event in September 2022. Having the Aamjiwnaang First Nation drummers present was a good addition to the celebration.
- BPAC recently prepared a Drinking Water Fact sheet and have made it available on the FOSCR website.
- A BPAC meeting on November 1, 2022. Had guests from Suncor, City of Sarnia, County of Lambton and St. Clair County Michigan speak about their roles when spills occur to the St. Clair River. BPAC would like to develop a Fact Sheet on spill notifications as well. A sub-committee of BPAC will work on the Fact Sheet, using information provided during the BPAC meeting. Having Walpole Island First Nation represented on the sub-committee would be beneficial. Work on the Fact Sheet is expected to start in January 2023, with a goal of finalizing it by June 2023.
- Life After Delisting and Long-Term Monitoring/Funding are important issues to BPAC. There is interest in understanding the vulnerability associated with marine traffic along the river. Need to understand trends and risks. BPAC will be sending a letter to Transport Canada requesting information on ship traffic along the St. Clair River corridor.

**9.4. St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) – Donna Blue**

- The SCRCA is updating its Strategic Plan for 2023-2028. It is available on SCRCA's website and was open for public comment until November 22, 2022. One of the actions/goals is to continue to participate in the St. Clair River RAP Program.

**9.5. Aamjiwnaang First Nation (AFN) – Cathleen O'Brien**

- No updates.

**9.6. Walpole Island First Nation (WIFN) – Naomi Williams**

- No updates.

**9.7. Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) – April White**

- No updates.

**9.8. Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) – Ted Briggs**

- No further updates.

**9.9. Bluewater Association for Safety, Environment, and Sustainability (BASES) – Jason Vaillant and Tracy Krull**

Jason and Tracy had to leave the meeting early but did provide an email to Mike Moroney on November 8, 2022 containing update information to share with the committee:

- BASES welcomed their new GM, Jason Vaillant to the team on October 17, 2022. Jason has an extensive background working in industry, as well as communications and stakeholder relations. Jason was born and raised in the Sarnia-Lambton area and is excited to return to working in the local community after working in Oakville for the past few years.
- There will be a feature in the BASES November newsletter on the September 13, 2022 BPAC cruise. Thanks to the SCRCA for sharing photos from the event to use in the newsletter.

**9.10. Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) – Trevor Robak**

- No updates at this time. Trevor was not able to attend.

**9.11. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) – Stephen Marklevitz**

MNR will be starting a Walleye tagging project on the Thames River. Anyone catching a tagged fish should contact MNR. Also working on Habitat Suitability Indexes for Native Species on the Sydenham River and the Thames River.

**9.12. Lambton Public Health – Theresa Warren**

- No updates.

**9.13. City of Sarnia – Terry Burrell**

- Terry Burrell advised that the City of Sarnia is into the next budget cycle. Sewer separation is in the on-going plan. Looking at addressing the basement flooding that occurred in certain areas of the City of Sarnia during a heavy rain event in summer 2022.

**10. Other Business**

- No other business

**11. Next Meeting**

It is anticipated that the next CRIC meeting will be held in winter or early spring 2023 at the call of the Chair (April White).

**Meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm**