

Meeting Record

DRCC Public Advisory Council & EPI Work Group

Wednesday, January 18th 2017 – 5:30-7:30pm
Ojibway Nature Centre, Prairie Room, Windsor, ON

1. Welcome, introductions, & approval of agenda

Tom Henderson called the meeting at 5:30pm and welcomed the group. Roundtable introductions took place (see Appendix 1 for meeting attendance). Since the EPI Chair is absent, Tom noted he would Chair that portion of the meeting with Claire and Gina contributing.

Claire provided a brief overview of the Detroit River RAP program (see Appendix 2) for all new and existing EPI and PAC members and reminded them of the differing roles of both groups.

For access to all DRCC publications, please visit our Technical Reports page on our website at: <http://detroitriver.ca/drcc-publications/technical-reports/>

Discussion took place regarding international involvement and the US RAP. Claire noted that the Detroit River is a bi-national AOC and there is a lot of collaboration and unique history associated with the origin of the Detroit River AOC. She noted that, while we have separate Remedial Action Plans and actions to restore AOCs are primarily carried out domestically, Canada and the United States share information, attend meetings together, and are given the opportunity to review and comment on assessment reports. Discussion also took place regarding the role of the IJC. The International Joint Commission works with all stakeholders involved in administering the Canadian RAP for the Detroit River to provide guidance and will comment on all three stages of the RAP process.

Tom reminded the group that the next Friends of the Detroit River US PAC meeting is on Monday January 23rd 2017. He explained that the DRCC is invited each meeting to attend and learn about their RAP progress and provide Canadian updates on any activity we are working on during that time.

2. DRCC Update since September, 2016

Gina provided the EPI and PAC with a brief update on some DRCC activities since September 2016 (see Appendix 3). Some of the monitoring programs that have taken place include collecting brown bullhead fish to inform the Fish Tumours and/or Other Deformities BUI, and placing predator guards on all four tree swallow nesting box monitoring sites that help inform Bird or Animal Deformities or Other Reproductive Problems BUI.

Gina also provided a summary of the following outreach activities:

- **World Rivers Day** - DRCC celebrated World Rivers Day with the Windsor Port Authority and Windsor Adventure Inc. on September 24th 2016. We hosted a cleanup at McKee Park as well as learned about kayak and canoe safety on the River and offered demos to the public. We also announced that two indicators of the Detroit River's quality are now considered restored, and no longer impaired as Beach Closings and Aesthetics BUI are redesignated on the Canadian side.

- **Detroit River Evening** - The Detroit River Canadian Cleanup (DRCC) hosted our 6th Annual Detroit River Evening on Wednesday, October 26, 2016 at the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER). The DRCC welcomed Peter Berry, Harbour Master of the Windsor Port Authority who gave a presentation on how industry can work in partnership with the environmental community on green projects both on the shore line and in the river. Project highlights also included presentations on the Creel Survey from Richard Drouin, Lead Management Biologist, Lake Erie Management Unit, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Also Jon Gee, Manager, Great Lakes Areas of Concern, Environment and Climate Change Canada presented information about the Great Lakes Areas of Concern. Last, Tom Henderson, Chair of the Detroit River Public Advisory Council provided an update on work that is being done by the PAC.
- **Annual Report** : http://detroitriver.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/DRCC_AR_2016_web.pdf
- **DRCC Visual Identity Project** - As part of the Communications Plan, Gina noted that DRCC undertook a visual identity project, where the logo and BUI icons were updated and templates for PowerPoint presentations, fact sheets, letterheads and other communication tools were created.

3. Ojibway Shores Natural Heritage Inventory/Evaluation Report published by the Essex County Field Naturalists Club

Jesse Gardner Costa, President of the Essex County Field Naturalists' club (ECFNC), presented the recent report produced and submitted to the Windsor Port Authority about Ojibway Shores (see Appendix 4 for the report executive summary). The Essex County Field Naturalists' club, with permission from the Windsor Port Authority, and in partnership with the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, Citizen Environment Alliance and Essex Region Conservation Authority were given the opportunity to undertake a biological inventory of the Ojibway Shores property. Data was collected solely on a volunteer basis and findings were verified by local experts. They used 4-season data collected from 2014 & 2015, trips with the club to the site, an Ecological Land Classification completed in 2016, and data collected from eBird. The report writing team included members from the DRCC, ERCA, ECFNC, and Gerry Waldron.

Ten evaluation criteria for 'natural heritage significance of the property' were developed by the study team. Other natural heritage inventories completed across the Province were reviewed in order to assess the current standards for natural heritage inventories and evaluations. Of the 10 criteria considered, Ojibway Shores met 9 of 10 criteria considered to be significant natural heritage. Jesse showed two maps including the PSW area and the ELC/vegetation community mapping exercise. He noted that a recommendations section was not included in the report.

Tom reminded the group of the WPA's role in allowing the public to access the site to complete this work and suggested that he felt they are generally supportive of protecting the area. He noted the recent news of the possible privatization of Port Windsor and suggested that, if privatization were to happen, the City of Windsor could potentially take it over as happened with the Windsor Airport. He noted that he sent the Transport Minister a letter (see Appendix 5) requesting further details about the fate of Ojibway Shores, should privatization occur. In the response letter, Minister Garneau noted that no decisions have been made about governance yet.

A discussion took place regarding the report and next steps. Hilary suggested that the WPA and ERCA can work together to preserve this property. A coordinated movement with collaboration from the public and other organizations involved can help as well. Tom noted that the report with the biodiversity

inventory and ELC classification are a great accomplishment. Jesse said that ECFNC has not released the report to the media or the public yet and is waiting to receive feedback from the WPA first.

4. “Thinking outside the ‘water box’ in the Detroit River Area of Concern”

Allison Turner, a current Master’s candidate from the School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability from the University of Waterloo, presented her research (see Appendix 6). She described the project focus was to identify external factors that influence water governance. External factors in the Detroit River AOC include economics of the surrounding area, land use changes, larger environmental changes and population growth. Through her research she has interviewed the DRCC as well as 25 other stakeholders involved with both the Canadian and US RAP. Her research will likely wrap up at the end of April, and she will share her findings with the DRCC.

ACTION ITEM: Gina to share all upcoming conferences regarding Great Lakes and AOCs with Allison. Done.

5. EPI Update since September, 2016

Gina provided an update to the EPI work group on the communications plan, the asset/story map, 3D model, Ojibway Nature Centre display and led a discussion to plan for the upcoming film screening event. All projects are still in progress and updates at the next EPI meeting will be provided.

ACTION ITEM: Claire to request prices from both Cineplex and Lakeshore Cinemas and determine date for screening

ACTION ITEM: Claire and Gina to communicate with the EPI and PAC about event details once finalized.

6. PAC Update since September, 2016

This agenda item previously discussed under #3.

7. University of Toledo Water Conference, November 2016

Jim Drummond attended the University of Toledo Water Conference, “Tale of Three Cities” in November 2016 and provided a summary of some sessions. In 2008, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Council (Compact Council) was initiated to stop communities outside of the Great Lakes Basin from withdrawing/diverting water. As Waukesha straddles the hydrological boundary of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds, they have become eligible for an exception of the ban. In 2016, the Compact Council approved Waukesha’s application to divert 8.2 million gallons per day from Lake Michigan with conditions to monitor waste water impacts to the Root River and annual reporting to Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces. Great Lakes mayors are not in favour of this decision and an appeal has been filed. If Congress and the new administration ‘okay’s’ the decision, the diversion will go on forever. Many advocates are worried that this will set a precedence for others to divert water from the Great Lakes Basin.

Tom noted that we were out of time but requested that Jim return to a future meeting with additional information.

8. Detroit River and Community Events

These upcoming events were noted:

- **Essex Region Conservation Authority Annual General Meeting and Conservation Award Ceremony**, Thursday January 19th 2017, 7pm, Essex Civic Centre
- **Friends of Detroit River PAC Meeting**, Monday January 23rd 2017, 1:30pm to 3:30pm, Taylor, MI

- **Lower Detroit River Important Bird Areas Waterbird Count**, Saturday January 28th **Shiver on the River** – February 2nd 2017, Belle Isle Casino, 10 am
- **Earth Day** – April 22, 2017, details TBD
- **Various Canada 150 Events** – details TBD

Additional announcements and events:

- [Windsor] **Lake Erie Millennium Network**. This 8th biennial conference is a series of events dealing with Lake Erie environmental issues. February 21-23, 2017 at the University of Windsor www.lemn.org/LEMN2017.htm.
- [Detroit] **2017 Conference on Great Lakes Research**. The 60th annual conference on Great Lakes research is scheduled from May 15-19, 2017 at the Cobo Center in Detroit. The focus will be the theme “From Cities to Farms: Shaping Great Lakes Ecosystems.” www.iaglr.org/iaglr2017
- The draft Triennial Assessment of Progress (TAP) report under the 2012 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the International Joint Commission commends Canada and the United States was released January 2017 to obtain public input until April 15th 2017. All comments regarding the [draft TAP report](#) as well as the two countries' [progress report](#) can be sent to ParticipateIJC@ottawa.ijc.org and online at ParticipateIJC.org. **Public meetings** - March 21, 2017: Detroit, Michigan and Toledo, Ohio

8. Meeting Adjournment and Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35pm.

Meeting record prepared by G. Pannunzio

APPENDIX 1

Attendance

Tom Henderson, PAC Chair
Gord Harding, PAC Co-Chair
Pete Thomas, EPI/PAC
Pearl Bradd, EPI/PAC
Derek Coronado, Citizen's Environmental Alliance, EPI/PAC
Patricia McGormann, PAC/EPI
Andy Paling, Friends of Canard River, EPI/PAC
Andy Paul, Friends of Turkey Creek, EPI/PAC
Daniel St. Denis, Caesars Windsor
Elaine Price, EPI/PAC
Councillor Hilary Payne, City of Windsor

Guests & Resources:

Allison Turner, MSc. student, School of Environment, Resources and Sustainability, University of Waterloo
Jesse Gardner Costa, President, Essex County Field Naturalists' Club
Jim Drummond

Claire Sanders, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, Detroit River RAP Coordinator
Gina Pannunzio, Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, Detroit River RAP Assistant