

1. Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Agenda

PAC Chair, Tom Henderson, called the meeting to order at 5:02pm. He welcomed all in attendance and reviewed the Meeting Agenda, and asked that the PAC items would be moved to the fore of the Agenda, and that EPI items be moved down accordingly to allow adequate time for, and to prioritize, Doug Haffner's presentation. Agenda Approval: Moved, as amended, by Phil Roberts, Seconded by Pearl Bradd; Approved by consensus.

(Meeting Attendance is attached in Appendix A)

2. Approval of September 21, 2011 Meeting Record

Approved by consensus.

3. Acting Coordinator's Report

Sandra provided a report to the group on her activities since September, and reminded the group that this would be her last meeting and that Natalie would be returning from maternity leave March 5, 2012. Sandra also reported that she has accepted a position with Conservation Ontario, in Newmarket. Pearl Bradd, on behalf of the EPI/PAC, thanked Sandra for her excellent work in the AOC over the past year and presented her with a token of their appreciation; also, Sandra was wished much luck in her future endeavours.

PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL

4. Monitoring and Research Work Group Report

Please see the Reports "Re-designation of BUI #13 Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations" and "Re-designation of BUI #10 Beach Closings" and the PowerPoint presentation for additional details.

Doug Haffner provided a PowerPoint presentation to the group regarding the re-designation reports "Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations" and "Beach Closings" as well as the Monitoring and Research meeting which was held in September. Doug noted that there needs to be increased communication between all of the DRCC's work groups.

- a) Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations - Doug explained that this BUI was originally designated as 'impaired' based on evidence from an EPA study which analyzed the toxicity of the outfall water in the Trenton Channel. At a workshop two years ago Greg Fahnenstiel wondered how the river could cause impairment to zooplankton and phytoplankton populations as the water flows so quickly. Doug reported on GLIER's study which indicates that this BUI should be designated as "not impaired". The recommendation of the Monitoring and Research Work Group is that the status be re-designated as 'Not Impaired'. Phil Roberts asked why the readings at Pêche Island are higher. Doug responded that the Lake St. Clair flow is what makes the Pêche Island numbers higher.

- b) Beach Closings – Doug provided a background note to this report saying that the MRWG did not want to be seen as supporting swimming at beaches in the Detroit River, because swimming in the Detroit River can be dangerous. He noted that the messaging for this BUI can be confusing / misleading to the general public. Monitoring was conducted over a three year period at 2 beaches inside the AOC (White Sands and McKee) and 1 upstream (Sandpoint) and 1 downstream (Holiday) reference beach. The data was collected by the Windsor Essex County Health Unit and ERCA. The Windsor Essex County Health Unit has issued advisories due to elevated bacterial counts in recent years; however, they have rarely resulted in closings. The monitoring has not yielded significant data to continue to list Beach Closings as impaired; however, it must be stressed that we not appear to promote swimming in the river – it is dangerous (ex. White Sands is close to a shipping channel). Members expressed concern that the public would misinterpret the re-designation. They also noted that it is still not safe to swim at beaches, as many are under advisories throughout the summer. Sandra explained that the method used to assess this BUI was suggested in the 2009 PAC Report Card on Beach Closings. She noted that the report includes information on advisories and advises the public to obey all notices and to only swim at monitored beaches.
- c) MRWG AOC BUI Workshop
A workshop was held in September with invited scientific experts to address 4 BUIs: 1) Restrictions on Fish Consumption 2) Fish Tumours and Other Deformities 3) Bird and Animal Reproductive Problems 4) Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations. Workshop participants discussed research priorities to support assessment and possible re-designation of these BUIs. .

Restrictions on fish consumption, is driven by contaminants, primarily PCBs (indicator species – walleye). Pearl noted that there may be an additive effect of chemicals and wondered if this was taken into consideration in consumption advisories. Doug explained that noted that that the MOE Fish Consumption guidelines are not protective for sustenance fishing. A hazard assessment model was developed for the Detroit River. This model uses contaminant concentrations in water and sediment to predict contaminant levels in fish. – Doug explained that the model shows contaminated sediments on the US side are driving PCB contaminant concentrations in fish and therefore consumption advisories. A similar model is has been developed for mercury concentrations. The data show that fish over 1 Kg in size will have fish consumption advisories based on mercury concentrations.

Fish tumors or other deformities – The linkage between contaminants and deformities is not well understood. The link between tumours and contaminants is well documented so the MRWG will focus on these. The background rate of tumours in the Great Lakes is 2%, which is used as a reference rate. In the Detroit River brown bullhead at Pêche Island have a tumour rate of 2% so they may be used as a reference population. Brown Bullheads pose a problem as it is difficult to get a statistically significant

sample size (approximately 100 fish per site). Bullheads are philopatric (the behaviour of remaining in, or returning to, an individual's birthplace); therefore, they are distinct populations. The MRWG are building number of samples up over time with 200 – 300 fish in each population. This is so the sampling doesn't have a negative impact on the total population.

Bird and Animal Reproductive Problems –

It is difficult to compile statistical information on deformities in animal populations within in the AOC (snapping turtles and leopard frogs have been used); and no bird deformities have been recorded in the Detroit River AOC. However, data showed reproductive problems in the herring gull populations' egg viability (contaminant accumulation in eggs, etc.) and a high incidence of dead herring gull embryos. Today, levels are decreasing and bird reproduction is improving. Proposed indicator species: black-crowned night heron, leopard frog and snapping turtle. 2 years of study on the black-crowned night heron population have been conducted to date. The MRWG has asked Environment Canada to complete a literature review on contaminant levels causing reproductive problems in black-crowned night heron to determine if the contaminant levels found in the Detroit River population could be causing reproductive problems.

Degraded fish and wildlife population; The MRWG has contracted Bird Studies Canada to analyze bird and animal population data available. The MRWG needs to coordinate with the Habitat WG to assess this BUI as this BUI and the BUI "Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat" are linked. There needs to be communication between the working groups. It is critical that all the working groups meet together. We need to explore a mechanism to bring the PAC and working groups together. Sandra noted that the Annual General Meeting should be a time when Work Groups and the PAC meet to coordinate actions. She explained that in 2011 this didn't happen because the AGM was more of a seminar. Further, she commented that it would be a good idea if the work groups and PAC participated in a formal meeting to before the public seminar. She thought that the work group chairs could contact the Steering and Implementation Co-Chairs to request this formal meeting.

ACTION: "The Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act" link will be sent to the membership. <http://www.fws.gov/midwest/detroitriver/documents/DRIWRestablishmentAct.pdf>

Derek Coronado recommended that electronic links be provided in the next Detroit River Annual Review publication.

It was noted the agenda outcome for the presentation was "endorsement of report". Sandra explained that it was meant to be an endorsement of the status re-designation of the 2 BUIs, *Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations* and *Beach Closings*.

DECISION: The Detroit River Canadian Public Advisory Council endorses the Monitoring and Research Work Groups' recommendation to re-designate the status of BUI #13 Degradation of Phytoplankton and Zooplankton Populations to "not impaired". *Motion by Gord Harding, Seconded by Pearl Bradd. Carried by consensus.*

DECISION: The Detroit River Canadian Public Advisory Council endorses, with condition, the Monitoring and Research Work Group's recommendation to re-designate the BUI Beach Closings to 'Not Impaired'. The condition relates to the DRCC's responsibility to acknowledge the public safety issue related to what may be perceived as our endorsing swimming in the Detroit River with this re-designation; efforts should be made to make clear the dangers, and to focus on the re-designation as a water quality issue. *Motion by Gord Harding, Seconded by Phil Roberts. Carried.*

5. Ojibway Shores Zoning Change

Tom presented an article from the Detroit Free Press announcing that the Deer Lake AOC has been delisted. Phil Roberts provided a report on the current status of the Ojibway Shores zoning change. At the City of Windsor Environment & Transportation Standing Committee Tom presented a proposal for the Windsor Port Authority to lease the land to the federal government. The Environment and Transportation was discussing a motion to encourage the City of Windsor and the Windsor Port Authority to continue discussion about re-zoning. On February 22 we are expecting a report from City Administration. The report is a result of Payne's request to identify why the conservation of Ojibway Shores is important. WECEC is going to ask for a deferral of the report until March. There will be a review of City owned lands beside Black Oak Heritage Park. Additionally, there was a Windsor Essex Parkway open house, and a personal invitation to PAC members was received from Stenzel. The PAC was well represented at this meeting. Phil explained that there are 8.9 hectares of Provincially Significant Wetlands, and that 3:1 compensation is required; this leaves 15 hectares to develop PSW's, and these new PSW's will be created adjacent to existing PSWs wherever possible. This means that 15 hectares are secured and a 120 meter buffer zone around the wetlands. Phil also reported that overall, from the permitting perspective, there are 110 hectares connecting Ojibway Park to Black Oak Heritage Park. The LaSalle Woodlot to Spring Garden area is receiving opposition from the MTO. Overall, it is a positive outcome in terms of composition for PSW's.

Marcia took over as chair for the remaining EPI agenda items. Due to time constraints the agenda was amended by consensus, and all items were tabled until the next meeting, except for the re-design of the logo.

6. DRCC & PAC Logo Redesign

(Please review the pdf presentation provided)

Sandra reported that quotes were obtained from a number of companies / professionals regarding the redesign of the DRCC and PAC logos. Paul Santos, graphic designer, was chosen as his price was affordable and we have worked successfully with Paul in the past and have been happy with his work.

- a) DRCC Logo: Two logo designs were preferred, #1 and #4: (referring to the page numbers in the pdf file as shown). For #1 the group offered the following comments: The top right hand box is a navy blue star and the group some suggested a different drawing go there; alternatives suggested were a plant (maybe a cattail or tree), or the outline of a person. They also want to see it with different colours for the background; particularly for the middle square which is purple right now. For #4 the group liked it as is; No changes were requested.
- b) PAC Logo: #4 was preferred. The group suggested that the colouration be blue instead of black. No other suggestions were made.

ACTION: Sandra to send these suggestions along to Paul Santos, and adjustments to the logo designs to be made accordingly (*Completed February 14, 2012*). Natalie to present the revised logos at the next meeting.

7. Other

8. Meeting Adjournment

Tom thanked Sandra for her work as the Acting RAP Coordinator over the past year and wished her success in her new position with Conservation Ontario. Meeting was adjourned at 7:43pm. The next meeting will be held at the call of the Chairs.

Meeting record was prepared by Kris Ives, Assistant, and Sandra Hogan, Acting RAP Coordinator
Approval by Tom Henderson, PAC Chair

Appendix A
Meeting Attendance
EPI / PAC Meeting – Monday, February 13, 2012

Tom Henderson	Chair – Public Advisory Council
Marcia Valiante	Chair – Education and Public Involvement Work Group
Gord Harding	Vice Chair – Public Advisory Council
Pearl Bradd	Public Advisory Council Member
Derek Coronado	Citizens Environment Alliance
Rick Coronado	Windsor and District Labour Council
Brett Groves	Essex County Stewardship Network
Doug Haffner	Monitoring and Research Work Group / Public Advisory Council
David Munro	Public Advisory Council Member
Phil Roberts	Essex County Field Naturalists' Club / Public Advisory Council
Al Stephens	Public Advisory Council
Pete Thomas	CAW Local 200 Computers for Kids
Mike Walsh	Public Advisory Council Member

Resource:

Sandra Hogan	Acting RAP Coordinator
Natalie Green	RAP Coordinator (on leave)
Kris Ives	RAP Assistant

Regrets:

Caroline Biribauer	Essex Region Conservation Authority
Ian Naisbitt	Little River Enhancement Group
Chris Vilag	CAW Local 200