

Meeting Record DRCC Steering & Implementation Committee

Thursday June 14, 2018 10:30am-12:30pm
Brighton Beach Power 100 Chappus Street, Windsor

1. Welcome, introductions, approval of agenda

Mike called the meeting to order at 10:45am with round table introductions. He noted that he is retiring at the end of the week and introduced Sean Morrison, the new Sarnia District Manager, who will replace him on the SIC. The meeting attendance is included as Appendix I of the meeting record. The agenda was approved by consensus.

2. Review of Action Items; Approval of Meeting Record from November 2017

A review of action items from the November 2017 SIC meeting is included as Appendix II of this meeting record. April requested a correction to the November 2017 SIC meeting record. Under the COA Task Team section, she noted that it would be Dawn and Jon, the COA Annex 1 leads, not the Task Team, who will provide recommendations to the RAP teams.

The meeting record was approved as amended by consensus. Claire reminded everyone that both the SIC and PAC meeting minutes are posted to the DRCC website once approved.

3. Updates from GLWQA, GLPI & COA; Four Agency Management Committee Update

a. Great Lakes Protection Initiative

April noted that the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (GLSF) is now incorporated into a larger umbrella federal fund called the Great Lakes Protection Initiative (GLPI), which includes five other funding streams as part of the federal commitment to protect the Great Lakes. This year, the call for proposals went out in January and ECCC has reviewed them. The review package of proposals is waiting for the Minister's final decision. April noted that one Detroit River partner applied but the final amount for funding has not been confirmed. She also noted that there they are in year two of a 2-year agreement with City of Windsor for a CSO control study west of Caron Avenue. Claire mentioned there is a brief summary about that project in the 2017/18 DRCC annual report.

b. Canada Ontario Agreement

Ted noted that COA project proposals were submitted in February and approvals are expected in July. DRCC coordination funds have already been approved, while outreach funds are pending.

c. Four Agency Managers Committee

Ted noted that we have received comments from MDNR on the Restrictions on Dredging BUI assessment but are still waiting for comments from EPA. It was suggested we should include a timeline for receiving comments for future assessment reviews.

4. Presentation: Recommendation to Amend Restrictions on Fish Consumption BUI Delisting Criteria (C. Sanders, A. White, T. Briggs)

Claire provided background on the Restrictions on Fish Consumption BUI and a recommendation from the Monitoring and Research Work Group to amend the delisting criteria. The presentation is included as Appendix III.

Current criteria:

When consumption advisories for indicator fish species (e.g., walleye, brown bullhead, and smallmouth bass) given for the sensitive population in the AOC are similar to upstream **and** downstream non-AOC Great Lakes reference areas.

Proposed amended criteria:

When consumption advisories for indicator fish species (e.g., walleye, brown bullhead, and smallmouth bass) given for the sensitive population in the AOC are similar to upstream **or** downstream non-AOC Great Lakes reference areas.

Claire noted that the Monitoring and Research Work Group recommends that the DRCC change the criteria to be upstream **or** downstream, since most fish advisories are equivalent to one and not both reference areas. This is because Lake St. Clair is a mercury source while Lake Erie and the U.S. side of the Detroit River are high in PCBs. Ted explained that when you look at original AOC mandates, they are intended to address sources of contamination within the AOC boundaries. On the Canadian side of the river, we have determined that there are no additional sediment cleanup actions that could be undertaken that would influence the consumption guidelines for indicator species. April mentioned that delisting criteria recommendations are being made across multiple AOC programs with this BUI as other RAP teams are running into similar issues.

Claire noted that the next step is to make a presentation to the PAC with the recommendation to amend the delisting criteria and potentially undertake a consumption survey along the shoreline. April and Ted noted that they would inform the FAMC of the delisting criteria amendment as well.

DECISION: The Steering and Implementation Committee agreed by consensus to amend the delisting criteria as suggested by the DRCC Monitoring and Research Work Group to:

When consumption advisories for indicator fish species (e.g., walleye, brown bullhead, and smallmouth bass) given for the sensitive population in the AOC are similar to upstream or downstream non-AOC Great Lakes reference areas.

ACTION ITEM: Claire will present the Monitoring and Research Work Group's recommendation to amend the delisting criteria for BUI#1 to the PAC.

5. Detroit River Proposed Habitat Projects (Collavino & Peche Island) (K. Money, ERCA)

Kevin presented an update on several proposed habitat project. His presentation is included as Appendix IV of this meeting record.

a. Collavino Wetland

The Collavino wetland is a privately owned 150-acre site in River Canard, close to the mouth of the river, and is a PSW. Proposed work in the wetland includes repairing the existing dyke and installing pumping infrastructure and water level control structures to manipulate the water levels on the inside of the dyke to improve habitat/fish access (similar to Hillman Marsh Conservation

Area work). Once infrastructure is in, the site can be dewatered and herbicide applications will help control phragmites. Currently, there is fish access through a culvert in the dyke. Fish passage as part of the new project is an option but needs to be designed by engineers when the project starts. April noted that SCDRS funding to US side for dam removal is available and wondered whether they would consider dyke removal as a project on the Canadian side. As dykes prevent fish access, and this could be a potential source justified by removing fish barriers. Andy asked whether existing wells on the property were decommissioned and Kevin said they were, with sign off with MOECC.

Discussion took place regarding the project budget. April noted that this project will support marsh bird populations in the DR and Claire mentioned that CWS has monitoring data from the last five years from the Canard surrounding this property, which can contribute to pre-restoration baseline data.

b. Peche Island

Kevin noted the Habitat Work Group has prioritized several possible projects at Peche Island, including installing a series of off shore islands on the north west side of the island to create calm, backwater areas for fish. Additional funds still need to be acquired but project partners include Weston Foundation via the Lake Ontario Waterkeepers. Kevin stressed this is a large project and there are some significant regulatory aspects, including the Species at Risk Act and the Navigation Protection Act, that need to be satisfied in order for the project to move ahead.

c. Shoreline Management Strategy

This project was initiated to help gauge progress on shoreline softening along the river. An inventory of cumulative work was collected to help determine what next steps are available with various partners. Aerial photography from 1931/1988/2017 was acquired and the ERCA Geomatics Technician is in the process of analyzing it. Discussion took place about the various options for Story Maps using aerial imagery to show change over time.

d. Wetland/Habitat Restoration

Kevin noted that two privately owned wetlands were constructed in the River Canard watershed this past year. Andy asked whether there is a Phragmites management plan in place for these projects. Kevin said there are management plans in place for ERCA-owned property, and education/resources are provided to landowners to help them with managing the problem.

Kevin noted that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry as well as the National Wetland Conservation Fund were the main funding partners for these projects.

6. First Nations Involvement update (C. Sanders)

As was recommended by Mary Alikakos (MOECC), Claire noted that she sent letters to the five First Nations that were signatories to the McKee Treaty of 1879: Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Bkejwanong (Walpole Island) First Nation, Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, and Caldwell First Nation. A letter also went to Oneida Nation of the Thames as they are the closest nation to the Detroit River included in the Nanfan Treaty of 1701. A letter was also sent to Delaware First Nation as they requested engagement with the Detroit River RAP during a Canada Ontario Agreement Executive meeting in the Niagara area in May. The letter (Appendix V) outlined the Detroit River RAP program and requested advice on how they would like to be involved with the program. Claire and Kevin met with several members of administration and a Band Council

member of Caldwell First Nation in April, where she provided a brief overview of the program and provided them with a Stage 2 and Pathway to Delisting.

Peter said that Walpole Island First Nation has expressed concern to the WPA regarding shoreline erosion, especially in the St. Clair River. April explained that multiple agencies are working together to address this problem and work towards solutions, such as slowing freighters. Funding and creative solutions for shoreline erosion, such as fish habitat creation, is also being looked at.

7. Working Group and Pathway to Delisting Updates (A. White, T. Briggs, C. Sanders)

Claire provided a verbal overview of progress on BUIs and noted that the updated 2018 Pathway to Delisting is now available on the DRCC website. It is also attached as Appendix VI.

Claire noted that the Degradation of Benthos assessment report is still under review by agency experts. April added that there aren't necessarily disagreements with the findings, but rather a suggestion that more detail should be added to the report and more in-depth explanations about some of the statistical approaches with the data. The next step is a face-to-face meeting in July with agency experts and the author of the report, Mark MacDougall, from the St Lawrence River Institute.

Claire noted that Pam Martin from the Ecotoxicology unit at ECCC will be speaking at tonight's Detroit River Evening. Her research is showing good trends of declining PCBs in Snapping Turtles and good Tree Swallow hatching success for the Bird or Animal Deformities and Reproductive Problems BUI.

April noted that Populations (BUI#3) and Habitat (BUI#14) go hand in hand, so the Work Groups are looking into conduct a workshop in the fall to assess the progress that has been made towards both of these BUIs with agency experts.

April noted that DFO will be looking at what has been collected for Zooplankton (BUI #13) in order to make recommendations on steps forward. A report will likely be produced by the end of the year.

8. Communications Plan Update (G. Pannunzio)

Gina provided a brief update on the DRCC Communications Plan and progress on planned outreach projects. Her presentation is included as Appendix VII. She noted that DRCC reached over 10,000 people in the last year by participating in 44 events, and there has been an increased effort with social media. The new DRCC display has been successful and used in outreach events. The inaugural Detroit River Family Fishing Day and Peche Island Day were both very successful. Discussion took place about the Detroit River Story Map on the DRCC website that garnered some media attention earlier in the year.

9. Public Advisory Council Report (T. Henderson)

Tom provided a verbal update on Public Advisory Council activities. He thanked Gord Harding for his many years of service as Vice Chair and introduced Andy Paling as the new Vice Chair.

He noted that the City of Windsor approved a zoning change from 'Industrial' to 'Park' for a 40-acre section of the Black Oak area. This increases the Ojibway complex area from 640 to 680 acres. Further, the Windsor Essex County Environment Committee (WECEC) passed a resolution to request that the Government of Canada conserve Ojibway Shores. This resolution then went to City Council who also adopted the resolution at its January 29, 2018 meeting, where Tom was a delegate. ERCA adopted a

similar resolution at a Board meeting in February. Currently, there are discussions taking place between the city and Windsor Port Authority regarding the fate of Ojibway Shores.

Tom also noted that US Congress approved \$300 million in funding for Great Lakes restoration. Two of the major US Detroit River projects include restoration of Belle Isle, which he and Andy visited with US PAC members in May. A discussion took place regarding the different management strategies and challenges for managing phragmites in the two countries.

10. Round Table Updates (ALL)

There were no updates. Mike noted that the annual report looked very good and encouraged everyone to attend the Detroit River Evening.

11. Other items/ Closing Remarks/ Next Meeting

Mike thanked everyone for attending and noted that the next meeting will likely be held in late fall 2018, at the call of the co-chairs.

Appendix I. Meeting Attendance

Neil Finnerty	Brighton Beach Power
April White	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Sean Morrison	Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Mike Moroney	Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Tom Henderson	PAC Chair
Andy Paling	PAC Vice-Chair
Paul Drca	City of Windsor
Ted Briggs	Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
Peter Berry	WPA
Kevin Money	ERCA
Claire Sanders	Detroit River Canadian Cleanup
Gina Pannunzio	Detroit River Canadian Cleanup

Appendix II. Action Items from November 1, 2017 and Updates

Claire or Ted to ask Rose Ellison to provide an update on the US EPA sediment remediation prioritization project at the next SIC meeting. Deferred to next meeting.

Ted and/or Mike to follow up with Mary Alikakos to determine if the province has a duty to consult with First Nations under the AOC program. Done. Claire will discuss with the SIC as this is part of the agenda.

Jon, Mike and Claire to discuss the engagement approach and content of the letters to the six First Nations. Done. See item 6.

Claire to set a date for the June Detroit River Evening 2018, send a meeting request to the SIC, and put it in the ERCA event calendar. Done. Currently 105 people registered for the annual Detroit River Evening.